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JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

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Values, Resources, and Politics in America's Schools

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Values, Resources, and Politics in America's Schools

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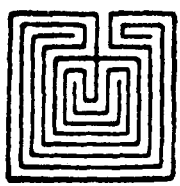

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Preface to the Issue, "Values, Resources, and Politics in America's Schools"

THIS ISSUE OF DAEDALUS has a long and unusual history. On perhaps the most significant level its origins go back to the *Daedalus* volume on "Scientific Literacy" published in Spring 1983. That issue appeared at a time when the American economy seemed to be faltering, when foreign competitors in both Asia and Europe were thought to be doing significantly better than the United States in certain crucial areas of industrial production and international trade, and when these conditions were said to be exacerbated by an educational system that was declared inadequate. The nation's schools were criticized; told, in effect, that they were failing to provide adequate instruction in a great variety of subjects and disciplines, especially mathematics and computer sciences, physics, chemistry, and biology. If the world was indeed passing through a "third industrial revolution," questions were raised whether America's schools were providing students with the knowledge requisite to success in the competitive "high-tech society" that many saw as inevitable. In recalling the American educational responses that followed the Soviet launching of Sputnik and in hearkening back to the no less substantial "crash" programs introduced immediately after Pearl Harbor, old remedies—particularly direct federal governmental intervention—figured prominently among the educational cures for the country's economic ills. What the nineteenth-century Morrill Act had done for agriculture, new legislation would do for late-twentieth-century American industry. If children, for whatever reason, lacked mathematical skills and if this impeded them in their later education and work, it was incumbent on the schools to offer such instruction and to do so immediately. If this involved their sacrificing certain other subjects—including some suddenly declared

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superfluous—this was a very small price to pay. Many who argued in this way viewed education principally as the acquisition of specific skills; if these were recognized to be lacking in the population, the schools were mandated to make good that lack. It was as simple as that.

Daedalus, in responding to that argument, in acknowledging its force, looked to its own earlier inquiries into schooling to set the questions in a somewhat larger context. Two *Daedalus* issues on secondary schools published some years before the theme had become fashionable had treated America's schools, public and private, as "embattled" institutions seeking to respond to disparate and diverse pressures while maintaining certain traditional concerns. Many schools had become "battlegrounds," and essays published in the two *Daedalus* issues "America's Schools: Public and Private" (Summer 1981) and "America's Schools: Portraits and Perspectives" (Fall 1981) spoke of a new political and litigious climate in the country that had critically influenced what schools were able to do.

In these *Daedalus* volumes, as in the volume on "Scientific Literacy," efforts were made to explain how America's schools had accommodated themselves to specific political demands, how they had sought to adjust themselves to a new social and moral climate. Curricular and other changes in local schools were examined in the context of larger national political and economic developments. The schools were clearly significantly altered; the question was whether they had purchased change at a price that involved their abandoning certain traditional educational missions. In all three *Daedalus* issues, the political, social, and economic dimensions of schooling were emphasized. Any other approach would have made it appear that schools were independent and self-contained, controlled wholly (or largely) internally by small numbers of professionally-trained men and women who were in a position to choose, to impose their choices on others. There was no such freedom, and it was foolish to pretend otherwise.

America's schools are permeable, susceptible to great numbers of conflicting influences, subject to social pressures but also to political direction, often covert and indirect but no less recognizable for its ideological intentions. The idea that any kind of school is able to flourish at any time and that the country welcomes great variety and constant experimentation presumes the existence of educational

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markets that are largely fictive. Though some may wish to pretend otherwise, most American schools are effectively segregated—socially, racially, intellectually, culturally. Changing any number of them, quickly or radically, is a herculean task; it is not likely to be achieved in the manner sometimes favored by avid educational reformers.

That the problems of schooling are not unique to the United States—that they are in fact common today to all the major democracies including Japan—is a fact rarely acknowledged, almost never analyzed. Indeed, few inquire into why this is so, or what it may reveal about contemporary society. While the United States has been preoccupied with its educational problems, others have been no less concerned. In France, for example, the publication of books with titles like *Voulez-vous vraiment des enfants idiots?, Le massacre des innocents, L'Enseignement en détresse* are in no way uncharacteristic. While they tell "horror stories" significantly different from the ones communicated by the plethora of educational books and reports that have issued from America's presses in the last several years, their fundamental message is the same: mass education is not working at all well.

Why, it may be asked, is it so difficult to establish and to maintain good (or superior) school systems? Why is the reform of the school curriculum—and not only in the natural sciences—proving to be so formidable a task? Why, indeed, does education today not elicit the ungrudging praise given to many aspects of modern medicine? Why do the "clients" of mass education—in the widest sense of the term—not express comparable satisfaction? This is not to say that contemporary health care does not have its critics; only that its accomplishments are not underrated. Some will say that the educational enterprise is too novel, that compulsory secondary education, for example, is largely a post-World-War-II phenomenon. They forget that much the same thing can be said of universal health care. Why has it been possible to extend access in health care without catastrophic results—though not without major fiscal difficulties—while no comparable achievement appears to have been registered in education? Is it that a new pedagogy is required, suited to a new and more disparate age cohort, and that the problem is one of motivation, that we simply do not know how to motivate the young? Why is this so; why are the young such a mystery to us? Why do we claim to

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understand many of their physical and psychological problems, or at least pretend to, and at the same time acknowledge our defeat in seeking to persuade them to want to learn? Or, ought we to be satisfied that we do as well as we do with so many? Is our failure not, indeed, very partial?

Does it really matter, for example, that certain major law firms in the United States find it necessary to engage law school graduates at salaries of something like $50,000 a year who are said to have substantial difficulty in spelling correctly or in writing felicitously? Is this not a very small matter, easily remedied? But what about the hundreds of thousands of others, young men and women, in large cities and small, issuing from America's schools, who are acknowledged to be functionally illiterate, who lack any competence in science, and who appear to have no other obvious academic skills? While test scores suggest that students in certain other countries achieve substantially more than do most high-school students in the United States, particularly in the natural sciences and in mathematics, is it not striking that glaring deficiencies in these and other disciplines exist almost everywhere? Why is it that so much appears to exceed the academic capabilities of so many? Is it that great numbers simply lack the intelligence to do the work that is asked of them? Or, as is more likely, do they simply fail to see the need for excelling in such things? Why, then, is it so difficult to demonstrate that academic competence matters, and not only in guaranteeing employ?

The fact that great numbers of young people appear to be unmotivated, that teachers are not able to motivate them, that parents are not notably more successful in doing so, is generally accepted. While any number of explanations may be given to account for the failures, none is wholly convincing. To suggest, for example, that the young are indolent, spoiled by a consumer culture that makes everything available to them too easily, argues for a quite simple calculus of adolescent motivations and pleasures. Nor is it enough to say that teachers are no longer committed to their profession in the way they once were, that they may no longer be as well educated. The last, almost certainly untrue, is of a piece with the view that family distress explains a good part of student delinquency.

Yet, these are the explanations that abound. In the United States, where television is both commercial and cheap, it is generally thought

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to be the prime enemy of education. Children, it is said, are much too preoccupied with television-viewing; they have lost the habit of study and lack entirely the old-fashioned faculty of close attention. As a result, they show no capacity for imaginative or intelligent inquiry. If this is true, and if television is indeed the agency responsible for these conditions, it has become a "common nuisance" that ought to be more effectively regulated. Why, then, has this not happened? Is it that while no one would disagree that television may help to spawn antisocial and anti-intellectual attitudes and that the situation is perhaps particularly serious in the United States where commercial television reigns supreme, even in those countries where the medium is more effectively regulated—as in Great Britain, for example—educating young people has become immensely complex? In England, Scotland, and Wales, where television is less violent, less common, less pervasive, the comprehensive schools appear to be confronting a host of educational problems not significantly less serious than those experienced by many high schools in the United States. Yet, no one would argue that the BBC and ITV are quite as banal or infantilizing as NBC, ABC, and CBS manage to be on many occasions. Clearly, television cannot be the all-important variable.

The fact of the matter is that we lack satisfactory explanations for many of the educational conditions that exist both in this country and elsewhere. While some argue that the problem is largely financial, that the schools are being economically starved, and that improved teachers' salaries would change a great deal, others insist that cultural changes in the society have made adolescents unreceptive to direction by older people, rebellious in wholly novel ways. Is the problem with the teacher, the student, or both? Given that many are not learning very much, is it possible that much of what is being taught is unintelligible to them? Can it be that many teachers scarcely understand the rationale for much of what they do? Are they themselves sometimes insufficiently persuaded of the necessity for learning? Are their students any less ambivalent? While there is mawkish talk in certain quarters about all that the humanities can do for students, is such argument not often self-serving and unconvincing? In explaining what instruction in the natural sciences is likely to do, not least in guaranteeing jobs in the new high-tech society that is being created, is the value of the instruction now offered not wildly exaggerated? Will a close scrutiny of American high-school courses in biology, for

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example, suggest that a complex modern science is being introduced, or will much of it seem to be lessons in personal hygiene? Does instruction in math in many schools begin to provide that basic numeracy that is so universally lauded? What are we to say about instruction in physics or chemistry, or in that new realm—computer sciences? The tendency to romanticize a machine and to exaggerate the competence acquired by many who are introduced to its mysteries may be one of the more cruel educational deceptions of our day. No one has asked whether instruction in the computer in most American high schools is good, whether it is not conducted in the same simple manner as instruction in other difficult subjects.

Everyone agrees that the habit of reading is diminished among the young, that it affects the way they write, speak, and think. Yet, we are unable to analyze how the situation can be changed or why it needs to be attended to. We continue to teach history, though it is increasingly unclear what the purposes of such study are, or whether the continued fidelity to a simple narrative approach makes much sense. As for foreign languages, while the rationale for proficiency is generally given in lame, utilitarian terms, most students learn slowly, without showing conspicuous gains in mastery or self-confidence.

Because journalists generally shun schools, finding them newsworthy only when violence and disorder erupt, and because novelists are not much more interested, preferring by far to treat the turmoil of college or university life, with its perpetual administrative squabbles and petty faculty rivalries, the narrative potential of the school is only rarely exploited. The experience of the child in school today is generally conventionally rendered. Schools are treated statistically; selective charts and graphs are offered to communicate all the facts that are needed; they are thought to be more reliable than metaphor. Testimony is generally taken when it is easily convertible into a more reliable form, a statistic. It is inevitable that school studies have assumed a quite particular character, and it is not wholly an accident that certain school issues—social, political, and moral—rarely surface. They are presumed to be either unimportant or, simply, unresearchable. Yet, if this issue of *Daedalus* has a single theme, it is that a wider literacy, a greater learning, will be achieved in the United States only when certain political and social issues are confronted, when intellectual versatility and competence are distinguished from other kinds of academic accomplishment, when professional organi-

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zation is conceived as something other than an administrative convenience, and when small reforms as well as systematic changes are seriously contemplated by those empowered to act in the schools.

It is not by chance that we have chosen to rely so heavily on interviews in this issue. Our purpose has been to learn from those who have responsibility in the matter, but who would disclaim any "representative" role. These men and women speak for themselves only, as do the authors of the individual essays. Yet their common concern is to shun many of the more conventional pieties, to strive for a candor that will lay bare certain of the reticences that have effectively taken educational issues out of the maelstrom of politics. There is little profit in pretending that education is value-free. The unambiguous message of this issue of *Daedalus* is that schools, properly interpreted, are capable of revealing an enormous amount about the society that sustains them. We have not begun to explore their potential for helping us to understand how American society is changing and how the tensions and conflicts of contemporary life are reflected in educational problems. They cry out for close, honest scrutiny.

This issue, produced two years after our original issue on "Scientific Literacy," is intended to take advantage of the substantial educational debate that has been inspired by recent commission reports and by the books and articles on schooling that have appeared. It is hoped that it will contribute to the perpetuation of that discussion, that schooling will not, like so many other issues in our "throw-away" culture, simply disappear from the public agenda. Indeed, the object ought to be not only to maintain the discussion, but to concentrate it on substantive issues, to avoid the easy rhetoric that so often substitutes for thought in this area, and to do it in such a way as will illuminate the problems and possibilities of choice in a democratic society.

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S.R.G.

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Gerald Holton

A Nation at Risk Revisited

On April 26, 1983, after nineteen months of intensive work, the National Commission on Excellence in Education released its report to the president and to the public. Cast in the form of an "open letter," this slim booklet, printed in large type, was entitled *A Nation at Risk*, and carried the self-confident subtitle "The Imperative for Educational Reform." In the weeks and months that followed, a large number of other reports on the same subject were issued by a variety of other groups, differently constituted, with other kinds of expertise. At their core, they all agreed remarkably in their findings and recommendations. Even more surprising, perhaps, was the unprecedented amount of immediate public attention that these documents generated. The ideas in the National Commission's report have found their way into the continuing debates and struggles over the direction of secondary education in the country. Activist groups with opposing agendas intending very different results are using the findings, language, and arguments of the commission. Presenting a personal view, and without claiming to speak for other members of the commission, it may therefore be useful, as the invitation to contribute to this issue of *Daedalus* put it, to summarize what this study contributed to the turbulent "year of the reports"; to suggest what the report did not attempt to do; to point out main polarizations in the responses; and to indicate the presuppositions, as well as the likely next moves of the competing camps.

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The National Commission on Excellence in Education was set up in August 1981, by the secretary of education, Terrel H. Bell, acting at President Reagan's request. Mr. Bell said at the time that he was acting in response to "what many consider to be a long and continuing decline in the quality of American education." A main goal was not merely to diagnose the problems but to initiate reform on a grand scale: "We want to seek a vast renewal of the education establishment of this country and a turning more and more toward the pursuit of excellence, to the increasing of standards." The charter charged the commission with examining the nation's educational system, with particular attention to teenage youths, and to make practical recommendations for action to public officials, educators, parents, and others who set school policies.

I was initially dubious about accepting the invitation. At any given time, dozens of well-intentioned commissions are at work on reports having to do with topics that are generally forgotten almost as soon as they are published. At that point in history, a few months into the first triumphant year of Mr. Reagan's presidency, there seemed to be little prospect for a substantial audience for a report on education. Except for occasional references to a gap between the achievements registered in schools in the U.S. and USSR, public interest in the subject was at a low ebb. The last two high points of public concern with education had come some time ago, in 1958, with President Eisenhower's National Defense Education Act, and in 1965 with President Johnson's Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which intended to provide equal educational opportunities for the poor and minority groups. The momentum in 1983 seemed to be going all the other way. Mr. Reagan had promised to abolish the Department of Education; his administration had initiated cutbacks that augured a marked decrease in federal funding for education. Studies from the Carter years, such as *Science and Engineering Education for the 1980s and Beyond,* had all but disappeared from public discussion.

An indicator of the new direction was the action taken by the National Science Foundation. Its charter directed it not only to support scientific research but also "to initiate and support . . . programs to strengthen . . . science education . . . at all levels"; but from 1970 on, the NSF had given an ever smaller part of its support, with only a brief upturn in the Carter years, to programs for schools, teacher training, and new curriculum development. From fiscal year

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1981 to fiscal year 1982, the NSF funds for education were cut by 67 percent; another 34-percent cut was impending for the following year. Except for a program of graduate fellowships, the NSF was on the verge of "zeroing out" all its activities in this field; the deletion of the Science Education Directorate from the NSF's operational chart was scheduled for a few months later. Not only was ours the only advanced nation to strip itself in this manner of central governmental support; more significant, perhaps, was that little audible objection was registered from scientists, teachers, business, or Congress. When a reporter asked the president's science adviser for the reasons behind the phase out, he was quoted as replying, "We don't know what the best thing to do is." For our commission to expect to receive wide attention for its recommendations, particularly if they differed from prevailing policy, seemed an unlikely prospect, despite Secretary Bell's hope for the outcome.

Equally problematic was the composition of the proposed commission. The list of invited members hardly reflected the education establishments, new or old—there was no dean of education, no education trade union official, no pundit from the educational press. Instead, there were two school principals, a superintendent of schools, and a "teacher of the year"; a renowned chemist, an industrialist-statesman, and a publisher of pedagogic literature; college presidents from southern, western, Ivy League, and community colleges; several members connected with school boards and boards of education; a state governor; and a person identified simply as "a parent." Of course, in addition, dedicated staff from the National Institute of Education was promised. Still, the proposed commission seemed to me likely to become eventually a convenient target of groups whose representatives had been left out. It was more a typical group of consumers of a study on education than the producers of such a report. In the end, this turned out to be one of its chief strengths, just as the timing of the appointment, at the bottom of a curve of attention that could only go up, proved to be fortunate.

None of this could have been foreseen; nor could anyone have imagined that on publication of the report, the response would be so intense that in short order some six hundred thousand copies of the booklet would be distributed (mostly to people who sent for it at $4.50 per copy). The report was also reprinted in large-circulation

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journals, bringing the estimate of its total distribution to well over six million copies.

Like some others on the eighteen-member commission, I thus accepted the appointment reluctantly, with the explicit understanding that there would be few meetings and that a minority report would be allowed if a need for it developed. Because the initial meeting in October 1981 set the stage for much that followed, it is worth remarking on. When a highly placed administration appointee was asked for an explanation of the radical downturn in federal support for science education, he said, quite simply: "There is no national mandate for such support." The meeting was continued at the White House where Mr. Reagan graciously received the commissioners and shared with them a structured and coherent set of themes and presuppositions about education that have since become more familiar. The president indicated that the encouragement of excellence in education, which should have first priority, might be achieved by making visible examples of good educational practice that already existed. However, he suggested it would also be well to remember the story of Farmer Jones, who confessed that he had no use for the new agricultural extension station down the road since he already knew how to farm better than he cared to. Costly programs, Reagan suggested, are wasted in the absence of sufficient motivation.

Reading from his prepared text, the president continued: since the country spent more on education in recent years "only to wind up with less . . . America [should] get back to stressing fundamentals in our schools"—fundamentals of learning as well as of principles. These principles encompass the following five: 1. Education is "the right and the responsibility of every parent," and institutions serve to "assist families in the instruction of their children"; 2. As in our economy, "excellence demands competition among students and among schools"; 3. Diversity and pluralism in American education "has always been one of the strengths of our society, and we welcome the recent resurgence of independent schools"; 4. We cannot "restore educational excellence in schools still plagued by drug abuse, crime, and chronic absenteeism"; 5. Let us "begin . . . by allowing God back in the classroom."

If the commissioners had been polled at that stage, they would, in my view, have been unanimous on perhaps only one point: that their

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most fruitful task would be to look carefully for exemplars of good local educational practice for which there might be hope of successful replication elsewhere. Yet, between the first meeting and the final one, a year and a half later, a remarkable transformation took place within the group. Having started from quite different positions and perceptions, the members reached total unanimity on the final report. Moreover, Secretary Bell accepted it publicly in every detail before transmitting it to the president. The member who had worried initially about the need for a minority report found himself commissioned to do the major part of the penultimate draft of the publication.

The facts had taken over. After dozens of meetings and hearings, together with field visits to schools and colleges, after trying to digest nearly forty commissioned reports from scholars and educators as well as a constant flow of background studies from members of the staff, the commission found itself, in the end, pushed by the data to the shared conviction that the state of American secondary-school education demanded systematic reform. Contrary to the main predisposition initially shared by the group, it had become clear that while identification of exemplars of good educational practice would be useful (and a working paper was subsequently published on it), this was by no means sufficient. The Exemplarians had been turned into Systematists, to use rough shorthand terms that hint at the current antithetical approaches to major educational change.

The commission, in my view, made five essential points. The first is simply the finding that the quantitative and qualitative indicators of the state of education, particularly at the high-school level, are on the whole unacceptably poor. To be sure, there are splendid exceptions. The top few percent of America's students seem to be as good as any in the world. Well-functioning schools exist, sometimes even in very depressed areas. There are numbers of effective and dedicated teachers and principals, some working under very difficult conditions. The school system can be proud of its record on access and retention, both of which have improved greatly during the last twenty years. The public's avowed commitment to good education for all children is so strong that opinion polls give education a top priority for additional federal funds—above, for example, health care, welfare, and even military defense. The reading scores of elementary-school

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children, many of whom benefited from federally financed remedial reading programs, are markedly better than those of their counterparts in the 1960s who had no access to such programs. For similar reasons, the basic skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic of the lowest-quartile pupils in elementary school appear to have risen. Graduates of President Johnson's "Project Head Start," now in high school, are doing significantly better than those with comparable backgrounds who did not get into that program. The much publicized decline in high school seniors' Scholastic Aptitude Test scores was recently halted, at least temporarily, even if the average score on *achievement* tests, which peaked in the post-Sputnik years, continues to decline at the high-school and college levels.

But, apart from the oases of encouraging results, the evidence pointed to conditions which, on balance, were arid and parched. The testimony of educational researchers, employers, teachers, administrators, and students portrayed a system riddled with inadequacies. The charter had asked the commission to look most intently at the high-school years; its inquiry had revealed massive dissatisfaction. Indeed, partway through their work, the commissioners had begun to realize that a politically potent reservoir of frustration existed. It spilled over at the time the various reports appeared, and accounted in good part for the great national interest taken in them.

One need not look far to explain the motivation behind this interest. In one way or another, education engages nearly a third of the American population at any given time—as students, teachers, administrators, suppliers—and therefore is a most ecumenical and cross-societal preoccupation. To borrow a phrase from another battle, preoccupation with education, in most households in the U.S., is the pro-family and pro-life activity *par excellence,* involving people of every age, ideological persuasion, and class. The stakes are high; anxiety in the U.S. (as in other countries) is energized by the perception that the young may not be sufficiently fitted with the skills and intellectual tools and attitudes needed to set down safely on their "landing field," a decade or two from now.

The provocative data found by the commission are now well known, and are not generally in dispute. They must be faced, even if in severely abbreviated form. A charitable count of functional illiteracy in this country yields more than twenty million adults; 13 percent of seventeen-year-olds, with 40 percent among minority

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youths, are in that same condition. Although that may begin to change a little, thirty-five states allow graduation from high school with little or no attendance in academic subjects. Possibly as a result, an ever-smaller fraction of the student body has been selecting courses with academic content. Eighty percent of high-school students take no science or mathematics after the tenth grade; on the average, graduates emerge with elementary geometry as their peak experience in scientific fields. Only one-third are able to solve mathematics problems that require two steps or more—and the news about one-step problem-solving capacity is not cheerful, either: the National Assessment of Mathematics discovered that 50 percent of seventeen-year-olds cannot find the area of a square when given the length of one side.

The ability to sit down and do homework is being rarely tested in practice. The U.S. Department of Defense reported that about a quarter of its recent recruits who graduated from high school cannot read at the ninth-grade level, the level required for basic safety instruction. At the other end, among relatively high achievers, there has been a dramatic decline over the past decade in the number of students who score well on the verbal and mathematics sections of the Scholastic Aptitude Test. With the number of test-takers fairly constant, the number scoring 650 or higher fell by 23 percent on the mathematics test and by 45 percent on the verbal test. Similar results were found for the top quartile in the National Assessment of Educational Progress. Fewer have registered to take the College Board Achievement Tests in English and history in recent years; moreover, their average scores have consistently declined. As for the low numbers of students taking foreign languages or calculus, the less said the better. And the test results in international comparisons of academic achievements are equally dispiriting.

In certain subjects, the overlap in instruction in successive years is deadening; tests show that a majority of academic-track students know 80 percent of the content of their textbooks in social science subjects before they have even opened the book. Most of the texts developed by national groups of scholars and teachers in the immediate post-Sputnik years have now been phased out. As if with a sigh of relief, publishers have gone back to the old-style texts that are easier to merchandize, prepared by authors who are easier to control, intended for teachers who are not expected to be trained to use the

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texts. The nominal 180 days of instruction per year in the U.S. become on the average only 160 when one considers student absences, and less still when one corrects for poor use of class time and incessant interruptions.

Two other indicators must be mentioned here, though they will figure again later. The federal role in shoring up education, which has always been relatively small but crucial, has been decreasing markedly in the last few years. Equally serious, because the damage is most difficult to repair quickly, the effectiveness of the majority of teachers has been severely compromised, however competent some of them may be individually. It is not too much to say that in most schools in America today, teachers are no longer able to act as professionals but are asked to operate on the level of service personnel. Correspondingly, the average teacher's annual pay, in real terms, has been actually shrinking (by 12 percent in the decade since 1972), and by 1982 had become about $17,000 for a teacher with twelve years of service in the school system.

The toll produced by a lack of reward is evident in many ways: the large teacher dropout rate after the first year or two; the steady inflow of more poorly prepared new teachers, with half of the newly employed mathematics, science, and English teachers being unqualified by license or preparation to teach those subjects. As for updating and retraining, which any professional or skilled worker constantly needs: 80 percent of the teachers in science and mathematics have not had even one substantial (ten-hour) study workshop in ten years. By comparison, for workers in industry the national average of the allowance for retraining in the bigger companies is seven hundred dollars per year, and double that for those in high-technology industrial employ.

The figures cited are only a small sample of the data that so disturbed the commissioners. They lead to the second main point of the report. On some models of social expectation such data might be considered sad but tolerable, an offense to intelligence, dignity, or sense of economy, but not to the social order. It might be argued that any system is bound to reveal certain horrors when forty or more million young people of every sort are kept in school, with authority distributed over sixteen thousand fairly autonomous school districts, each run by a school board made up of local volunteers. On this view,

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it is sufficient that there are, as there always have been, enough successes in the system to keep the country supplied with workers and managers, scholars and scientists, trained in their after-school careers by industry or universities. As long as the system is kept open enough, and the exemplars and incentives beckon, the best by any measure will rise to the top, as before. To increase resources would be uneconomical, because there is no guarantee the system would then work better; it could be awkward, even dangerous, if the system were to become more efficient, turning out too many overqualified people. Moreover, the total bill for educational expenses is already high—on the same order as national defense.

Evidently, the commission took a very different view of the data when it came to the alarming perception that the nation itself is "at risk." At bottom it refused even to consider the concept of triage implied in the social-Darwinian view of how educational systems might function. The report embraced instead the opposite principle, which postulates that an attempt must be made to prepare a safe landing field for every child, no matter how much the attempt may be frustrated in individual cases.

An elaboration of the metaphor of the landing field may be useful. In a world shaped by ever more sophisticated knowledge and technology, it is more than likely that a worker or professional will quickly become obsolete if he or she cannot constantly adapt, learn, and renew. This is true from the beginning of a career to the very end. A common source for the worldwide concern with the effectiveness of education is the acceleration of history itself, which is resulting in new ground rules for the viability of nations for the pedagogic preparation of its citizens. Economic viability is only part of a larger concern. The ultimate aim of education in a free society is to help every young person gain intellectual and moral effectiveness and autonomy, so as to achieve personal freedom. It is unacceptable that by the very design of the system, many should be subjected entirely to the play of uncomprehended and uncontrollable events. This is the modern interpretation of the old prescription, *liberi, liberaliter educati*—free persons, liberally educated—that sets forth the functional link between individual liberty and the institution of a balanced curriculum.

To be sure, there is no easy way to demonstrate that this view (or, for that matter, its opposite) is correct beyond challenge. Most

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modern educators, however, particularly those ready to be known as reformers, are inspired by this presupposition, which functions for them as a necessary thematic hypothesis. There is also no proof that jobs in the future will demand more brains and more skills from the average citizen, or that jobs in the high-tech sector will exist in sufficient numbers for them. But even those who suggest that industry will be satisfied with the most basic skills at entry level and will teach the rest on the job for those lucky enough to have one, must recognize that even on that narrow model there is fairly wide agreement that movement into a career or up the employment ladder will demand knowledge, skills, and habits at a level high enough for individuals to profit from continuing-education programs. The future is not likely to resemble the present. For a large fraction of children in school today, their lives as wage earners may well have as little to do with today's computers and workplaces as today's desirable jobs have to do with yesterday's steam locomotives and printing presses.

Thus, to prepare students for their future landing field means preparing them for a lifetime of learning new competences and of exercising critical thought in ever changing circumstances; for without such autonomy, the young person is likely soon to be left behind, bewildered by rapid changes in the conditions of work, confused about the issues on which citizens must act. On this model, proper schooling will not only do its share toward securing a tolerable life for the individual and the family, but will also help to avoid a split within our society between the small, technically competent elite on one side and the large mass of the people on the other. That threat to a functioning democracy has preoccupied political thinkers since the time of Jefferson; it is now more compelling than ever. A growing fraction of the decisions made at federal, state, or local levels involves technical judgments, whether they touch economic policy, environmental issues, arms control, or other major concerns. Citizens must be able to participate at the very least by asking persistently the right kinds of questions. The franchise is devalued when major debates among experts are in principle inaccessible to the electorate.

If one reads the report of the commission with these points in mind, it becomes evident why the group thought that America "is at risk," why "educational reform should focus on the goal of creating a Learning Society." The concept of formal education as the preparation for a lifetime of continued self-education in a rapidly changing

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world is a key to understanding the report's recommendations, though this is rarely noted in the voluminous commentary on the report.

The commission's first specific recommendation, then, was that schools seriously aim to prepare every student, *whether college-bound or not,* to enter and participate in the Learning Society through tested competence in the "new academic basics," so that he or she would have the confidence and motivation to use these tools for further learning. The redefined basics, to be taken during the four high-school years, consist of four years of English, three years of mathematics, three years of science, three years of social studies, half a year of computer science, and, for the college-bound, at least two years of a foreign language, building on earlier courses taken in elementary school. Complementary studies were also recommended in the fine arts, the performing arts, and other subjects, provided the basics are accommodated.

While any such list, in the nature of things, can only be a quantitative rendering of the intended quality of learning, it is a necessary beginning. The disappearance of just such requirements produced the proliferation of nonacademic electives that compromised the standards of achieved competence. Difficult though it may be, it is the task of the school to design the pace and level of instruction to match the student's own best abilities; there is no suggestion that all students should be exposed to one master curriculum.

The difficulties of carrying out such a mandate are at once evident. It cannot be done without a greater number of able school teachers, without greater financial resources allocated to the schools, without a better use of research now available on learning, or for that matter, without the better use of time in the present school day, especially if one wishes to avoid lengthening the school day or school year. These obstinate realities, like those concerning different rates and levels of learning, define the size of the task, but they do not detract from the main purpose. The commission's first recommendation coincides with the finding of a National Academy of Sciences panel of business and education leaders, released in May 1984, that at the school level "virtually the same" basic academic skills need to be mastered by students who will start to work after high school as by those who are college-bound. The NAS report confirmed also that employers regard

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the major asset of a high-school graduate to be not the mastery of a particular set of job skills, but "the ability to learn and to adapt to changes in the workplace. . . . Those who enter the work force after earning a high school diploma need virtually the same competences as those going on to college, but have less opportunity or time to acquire them. Therefore, the core competences must always come first during the high school years."

Essentially the same conclusion concerning the primacy of academic basics can be reached from a quite different direction. The commission's survey of schools confirmed what had long been noted by educational experts: schools can be found in very disadvantaged settings that do provide a good education for a large fraction of their students. What such schools have in common is their stress on academic basics. The teaching goals are made very clear and the expectations of student performance are kept high. The climate for learning is set by the school's sense of mission. From this derives an implicit respect for achievement and continuing evaluation; acceptance of strong administrative leadership especially on the part of the principal, and the involvement of both teachers and parents in the operation of the school. Through such procedures, a whole range of problems, from keeping discipline to preparing for employment, is made much simpler.

A third basic realization concerns the awful distance between hopes and realities. The idea of preparing students for autonomy through an academically substantial program could not have come at a worse time, given the new burdens such a reform would place on present schools and teachers. The system is already staggering from nearly two decades of adding important social missions, with greater access being given to high schools for special-need students, including the handicapped, a greater concern with remediation and nutrition; and the continuing efforts at integration. There is need for all these things to continue; still, they have redefined and made more difficult the role and functioning of both teacher and school.

Also, as these missions have been strengthened, there has been a corresponding weakening of the commitment to keep up the school's basic academic purposes. In addition to indicators already mentioned, such as the winding-down of NSF support, one may cite the flagging interest of colleges to provide schoolteachers; the decreasing commitment of many of the great universities to their graduate

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schools of education; and, above all, the flight of the proportion of students from academic courses in high school. During the last two decades, the proportion of students enrolled in a meaningless "general track" program, one that is neither academic nor vocational, has gone up by a factor of three, from 12 percent to 42 percent of the student body. These ominous figures measure a betrayal of the hopes of many for quality education. While the school now retains a larger fraction of our young people, they have been drifting in ever larger numbers into a storage area that prepares them only for a life of menial work or of consumerism. It is an explicit renunciation of the idea of a Learning Society.

Fourth, in common with all other reports on education, it was found that life has become by and large unacceptable for the kind of teacher one most wishes to have in our public schools. The best prepared are the most likely to leave for better jobs outside public school teaching; those who stay on are required to be heroes even when their qualifications to teach the assigned courses are weak, and they have difficulty identifying and challenging the more gifted and talented of their students.

The salary and retraining opportunities teachers have would be quite unacceptable in any other group that has a claim to professionalism. Most teachers receive no help with the administrative and low-skill chores heaped on them. Most have little or no influence in such critical professional matters as the preparation of texts or the selection of books, the keeping of classes to manageable size, the peer review of performance, promotion, and tenure of colleagues. Indeed, few know what subjects they will be required to teach a week hence. Recognition for a teacher's meritorious performance is rare; it may even be prevented entirely by barriers specifically set up for that purpose.

One can understand why a group that through no fault of its own has been so battered reacts with alarm to certain of the specific proposals made to improve the preparation of teachers, to make teaching both a more rewarding and more respected profession. The opposition of some teacher groups does not extend, however, to most of the specific recommendations of the report: that colleges and universities do a far better job in pre-service and in-service training of subject matter; that teachers be tested on the mastery of their subjects before they are hired; that salaries be increased; that school boards

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adopt a twelve-month contract for teachers to ensure time for curriculum and professional development; that the class day be free of administrative interruptions; that so long as the current shortage of science and mathematics teachers continues suitable people from industry and academic life be recruited and trained; that museums and other centers become involved in education; that loans, grants, and other incentives be made available to attract outstanding new recruits to the teaching profession.

Nor are teachers averse to other public-school reforms even when they require further sacrifice and extra effort. As the recent nationwide poll of teachers by Louis Harris and the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company shows, teachers approved by huge majorities a new emphasis in their classes on the study of serious academic subjects, more rigorous graduation requirements, increased homework. They favored also, overwhelmingly, the career-ladder concept, the principle of periodic evaluation, and other changes intended to identify and remove incompetent teachers.

If there is criticism by certain teacher groups, it focuses chiefly on the recommendation to make "salaries professionally competitive, market sensitive, and performance based." The fear is fundamentally one of seeing too great a differentiation in pay and status simply on the basis of "merit," as defined by others. It is understandable that "merit pay" has become something of a red flag. Unless there is a marked upgrading of salaries across the board, with the present low level in many cities and states corrected, any policy concentrating on differentiation of pay must mean, in practice, that most teachers will experience cutbacks when the inadequate pool is reapportioned, often by criteria that the teachers themselves do not trust. Yet, the cost of the continuing focus on this one issue, to the exclusion of all the others—especially on one phrase in one of forty recommendations covering some ten pages of the report—may serve only to maximize the political problem of bringing about any change, by deflecting attention from all the other findings and recommendations.

The report's most politically sensitive recommendation, the most revealing certainly in terms of its underlying presupposition, is the last, which was published under the heading "Leadership and Fiscal Support." It begins with the admonition that "citizens across the nation hold educators and elected officials responsible for providing

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the leadership necessary to achieve these reforms, and that citizens provide the fiscal support and stability required to bring about the reforms we propose." To be sure, it is recognized that state and local officials have "the primary responsibility for financing and governing the schools"; but there are three specific, detailed implementing recommendations that involve the federal government. First, the federal government should help meet the needs of key groups of students, such as the gifted and talented, the disadvantaged, minorities, and the handicapped. Next, its "role includes several functions of national consequence that states and localities alone are unlikely to be able to meet: protecting constitutional and civil rights for schools and school personnel; collecting data, statistics, and information about education generally; supporting curriculum improvement and research on teaching, learning, and the management of schools; supporting teacher training in areas of critical shortage or key national needs; and providing students financial assistance in research and graduate training." And then, to make certain that the reader not be left in any doubt about the matter despite the report's parentage, a separate recommendation was added:

> The Federal Government has the *primary responsibility* to identify the national interest in education. It should also help fund and support efforts to protect and promote that interest. It must provide the national leadership to ensure that the Nation's public and private resources are marshalled to address the issues discussed in this Report. (italics in original)

In my opinion, the eventual fate of educational reform in this country depends as much on the will to implement this paragraph as on any other act. Our decentralized educational system has never and never will be able to make significant across-the-board changes within a five- to ten-year time frame in response to a national challenge if the leverage of the relatively small but vital federal contribution is not brought to bear, in terms of both planning and financing. Moreover, without strong national leadership, the impulse for reform can easily dissipate; in education, the time required to achieve and make visible striking improvements is much longer than the normal attention span that is common in America for a public issue.

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It may be useful to note what the commission report did *not* attempt to do. To begin with, it did not call for additional reports. It avoided both the language and the mode of presentation common to academic communities and bureaucracies; it tried to reach its intended reader in unvarnished language. The effort to attain unanimity in the commission did not, to my knowledge, involve compromise on any very strongly felt point. One exception, perhaps, was the unwillingness to estimate the funds that would realistically be needed to put the recommendations in place. This omission, however, was essentially anticipated almost from the beginning, and was remedied, at least in part, by other reports, including that published by the National Science Board, which both set forth and explained the necessary price tag at least for the science- and engineering-oriented programs.

The report studiously avoided stressing what are commonly seen as the "inexpensive solutions"—the identification of exemplars with assumed transplantability, the encouragement of selected teachers and schools by the issuing of ceremonial awards, and the pursuit of other such activities. There is no objection to any of these so long as they do not displace the more essential solutions that will necessarily cost more.

As a consequence of the decision to make the report relatively brief and easy to read, with a separate release of the many commissioned background papers, the final version necessarily was too brief on a number of points that deserved more attention. Not enough, for example, was said about the educational reform needed in America's colleges, nor about the preparation a child ought to receive in the years before high school. "Science every day" is a necessity in the early years if anything like scientific literacy is to be achieved. Not enough was said about the general absence of libraries, or about the run-down and demoralizing physical conditions of so many of the schools in which both teachers and students are forced to spend a good part of their lives. No attempt was made to dwell on the design of stern codes of discipline, as a preliminary to attempting a larger reform; it is probable, in any case, that the causal chain in this instance runs the other way.

Too little was said about the role and responsibility of the educational publishing industry, which functions in this country somewhat as a ministry of education does. The publishers' output

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and policies are immensely influential in shaping the curriculum. The final text of the report might have said more on the troublesome state adoption system for selecting texts; on the lack of teaching aids and laboratory apparatus in too many schools; on the fact that the total science curriculum throughout the U.S., unlike the situation in other advanced nations, not only suffers from being too little and too late, but is upside down intellectually. Whereas the natural sequence in science instruction is to provide a base in physics for subsequent learning in chemistry and then in biology, with parallel development in mathematics, America's high schools almost uniformly go in the opposite order, making each of the subjects more difficult to learn, less likely to be mastered properly.

With respect to other tasks not done, I will mention only three. The report might have made a strong plea that a Learning Society requires a more structured system of widely accessible adult education; this might include the kind of Open University through television and other electronic means that has been found to work well in other countries. On the other hand, it was probably reasonable for the commission to avoid pronouncing on such long-standing and unresolved philosophical battles as to whether the school ought chiefly to help shape the students to its expectations and standards or whether the school ought to be shaped largely by the student's own interests. Such differences are not likely to be resolved by a statement any commission may choose to make.

For similar reasons, the report did not come to grips with the most ominous question of all—how even an "excellent" school can fulfill its multiple functions for a large and growing fraction of our society that appears to languish in the darkness, below the security provided by any safety net. As one teacher put it recently, who will cure a child's inability to learn when the child comes to class hungry, with broken eyeglasses and rotting teeth, having been kept awake all night by family fights born of desperation, and showing all the psychological scars of an inhumane life beyond school? Or, as another teacher said, if you have just become a member of the majority of children under age eighteen in this country that lives in single- or no-parent households, how important is algebra?

The nationwide attention that the report received on its release in April 1983 was undoubtedly triggered in good part by two circum-

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stances. One was the president's willingness to launch the report. As Justice Louis Brandeis once wrote: "Our government is the potent, the omnipotent teacher. For good or for ill, it teaches the whole people by its example." The other was the fact that the report's release took place during a meeting at the White House in the presence of the press. Having received the document some days earlier, the president began his own presentation by citing some of its findings. But his primary reaction to the report may be indicated by his comment: "Your report emphasizes that the federal role in education should be limited to specific areas, and any assistance should be provided with a minimum of administrative burdens on our schools, colleges, and teachers. Your call for an end to federal intrusion is consistent with our task of redefining the federal role in education. . . . So, we'll continue to work in the months ahead for passage of tuition tax credits, vouchers, educational savings accounts, voluntary school prayer, and abolishing the Department of Education. Our agenda is to restore quality to education by increasing competition and by strengthening parental choice and local control."*

This list of proposed federal actions, though neither discussed nor endorsed in the report, were strikingly consistent with the desiderata set forth in the president's initial meeting with the newly appointed commission, nineteen months earlier. Most of those views were expressed also at other times: in the State of the Union messages of both January 1983 and January 1984; in presidential radio addresses and news conferences, and in the Republican party platform of August 1984.

I believe that some of the initial attention given to the report by the media stems from the perceived dissonance between the recommendations and the interpretations of them. Be that as it may, education suddenly has become a daily, inescapable feature of

*"Tuition tax credits" is a proposal to give a tax deduction to parents whose children attend private schools. "Educational savings accounts" would be analogous to IRA funds now invested by individuals; they would not be taxable. "Vouchers," as usually proposed, are negotiable certificates of specific value issued by the state or local school authority to parents who may use them to pay for their children's education at the school of their choice, whether public, private, or parochial. The source of the money would be funds from the federal government now furnished to the states under the Aid to Disadvantaged Children program (Chapter 1).

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newspapers and magazines. The other reports that soon followed, with quite congruent recommendations, only added to the momentum. The rapidity with which America is able to embrace (and later drop) an issue has always amazed commentators. In this case, also, the turnaround from the previously low state of visibility of education was striking. There was little doubt that now an operational, national mandate on behalf of quality education was waiting to be exploited, provided the political and educational leadership knew how to use the occasion properly.

What has come of all this? What are the chances for an educational renewal similar to the one that followed Sputnik? At this writing, after a year and a half of debates and planning, the prospects are mixed. As a recent, 229-page compendium ("A Nation Responds") issued by the Department of Education indicates, a large number of individual attempts at change are being considered by state and local authorities throughout America. For example, increases in the required number of academic courses for high-school graduation are being discussed in almost all the states, and have been approved in thirty-five; upgrading procedures for recruitment, certification, professional development, and compensation of teachers are being debated in practically every state, and a few states have taken action; a growing number of college systems report having raised their admissions standards; joint ventures, involving business and industry cooperating with schools and colleges, are becoming more common. Much of this was initiated before the publication of the various reports; given the slow response characteristic of many educational systems, more work will be needed in the long run to improve the curricula and the texts, to make more money available to recruit more good teachers. But, all in all, the products of the "year of the reports" have clearly been used to speed some actions by policymakers at both the state and local levels. Ironically, the public's confidence in what its schools are doing has risen substantially during this same period. One polling firm attributes this to the series of well-publicized studies, contributing to the belief that "many schools have heeded the criticisms made in the reports and have instituted the reforms."

Promising pilot programs already exist that take scientists and engineers from industry, including those who wish to start a new

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career or take early retirement from a previous one, and train them for service as teachers in areas where there are great staff shortages. Public-awareness programs have sprung up to select good teachers and to recognize them with citations. Professional and scholarly societies have become more active; for example, the American Association for the Advancement of Science is forming a consortium to bring together all the interest groups involved—scientists, engineers, business people, government officials, and educators—to assess the progress being made toward quality science education and to sustain the common national interest.

But the biggest remaining problem, of course, is that of funding, in order to repair past neglect and to achieve higher educational standards. Federal spending for aid to elementary and secondary schools is still significantly lower, in real dollars, than the 4.8 billion dollars appropriated in the last year of the Carter administration. Most states and localities do not have additional resources to meet their educational hopes. Some private foundations and corporations are turning their attention to the problem, but their available funds are not even potentially of the right order of magnitude. Moreover, even if some of the narrowly targeted federal support plans for schools now debated in Congress come to fruition, they will require a 50-percent match with non-tax monies.

Apart from financing, there are other substantial obstacles to a lasting, wide-ranging reform. One of these obstacles is the disunity among those who could help in the implementation of common elements in the various proposals. While the recommendations of the commissions were widely welcomed by school boards, professional societies, individual teachers, and citizen groups, they received as little initial endorsement from some prominent members of the traditional educational establishment as they did from the president of the United States—although for diametrically opposite reasons. The basic findings and most of the recommendations were not challenged, but there was substantial opposition nevertheless. A former commissioner of education set the tone; on the release of the report he expressed doubts about the need for serious reform. What ailed the schools, he said, was a case of flu, not of pneumonia. For many months, the senior education columnist of the paper most widely read by educational policymakers devoted his space to repeated attacks, often on essentially semantic points, ending the year

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with a characterization of this and the other, related reform movements as simply wanting to "get tough" on schools and students, rather than wanting to "get better schools." The difference, he held, is "between clamping down and opening up," between causing "panic" and providing "opportunities." The authors of two of the last reports to reach the public devoted much press commentary to doubts about the recommendations of the earlier reports even while offering proposals of their own that closely paralleled them. One educational expert dismissed all the reports as essentially useless: "All such commissions are ill-equipped for the task of policy analysis." Publishers also expressed their unhappiness with the findings. So did many teacher-union officials, with the striking exception of Albert Shanker. The future student of these discordant notes may well be reminded of the Byzantine disputes of the factions inside beleaguered Constantinople, while Sultan Mehmed II and his troops were literally battering down the walls of the city. The inability of people of allied fates to focus constructive attention on the task at hand turned out to be as damaging as the large, new gun of the sultan.

The average reader of the daily newspaper might even now think that the most burning problem with education today has chiefly to do with whether the tide of mediocrity, in the now-famous metaphor, is still rising or whether it crested some time ago; whether it would be better to add some days to the school year, or make better use of the time now available; what title to bestow on the good teachers who are desperately needed now, but whom we do not presently have; and whether we ought not all to keep silent until some new philosopher of education, a Pestalozzi or a John Dewey, arrives to give us our marching orders.

One immediate casualty of this displacement of attention has been the lost opportunity to reach the citizenry in a more united and hence credible way, to explain how much time, manpower, and money it will really take to upgrade education, to what degree those funds are investments rather than mere expenses, and what the balance of funding sources should be. As John Gardner put it in the new edition of his classic book *Excellence:* "Americans care deeply about the schools; but their minds wander. The basic requirement for effective functioning of the schools is that the public be concerned and involved."

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There is as much confusion out there as there is good will. Thus, the public tells the pollsters it wants more serious subjects in the school curriculum—over half want more academic subjects taught than the commission recommended; indeed, more than there is now time in school to do it. The public is content to leave primary responsibility for improving and governing the schools principally in local hands, as is both traditional and appropriate; but these ambitions do not translate into votes for sufficient local tax monies (although the pollsters report a substantial majority willing to agree to higher federal taxes if these were channeled to better education).

An opportunity has been lost to consider carefully the future viability of the public-school system if the program of tuition tax credits, vouchers, and educational savings accounts is enacted. When enough parents are dissatisfied with the quality of public schooling, when these proposed devices make an exit from public schools easy, and when the melting-pot myth has given way to a splintering along both ethnic and religious lines, the exodus from a troubled system, with its unmanaged obligations, could be catastrophic. The theory that public schools would be strengthened by a challenge to compete has to be set off against the probability that they would be weakened by such flight, with the attendant loss of community support for the long-established, ecumenical mediator helping to negotiate local or individual differences. It was this last concern that led John Adams to say, "the whole people must take upon themselves the education of the whole people, and must be willing to bear the expense of it."

The alternative to the notion of the common school, commonly supported—which is at the heart of the public educational system—was succinctly put by William F. Buckley, Jr. in a column entitled "The Way to Excellence," which appeared shortly after the release of the report. The commission "didn't say what is most needed. That, of course, is tuition tax credits. . . . The only obstacle that stands in the way of the substantial privatization of the school system is ideology. Private schools, in situations in which the public schools are not doing the job, are doing what comes naturally in America."

The move toward a substantial privatization of the school system takes yet another form. A number of major corporations are reported to be considering the creation of proprietary elementary and high schools, which they expect to run at a profit. This, of course, is a long way from the useful and well-working partnerships between local

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businesses and school districts that have become somewhat more common in recent years. Halfway between these extremes is the kind of involvement of the private corporate sector recommended by William Norris of Control Data Corporation in May 1982 at a convocation at the National Academy of Sciences. He said:

> The missing ingredient is nationwide broad-based partnerships in which business addresses improvements in education as profitable business opportunities in cooperation with other sectors. In order to realize the full advantage of the use of advanced technology in the educational process, the management of schools themselves, or schools within schools, should be contracted out to business, which has the expertise to use advanced technology efficiently.

On the occasion of receiving the report, the president remarked that "we spent more on education than any country in the world. But what have we bought with all that spending?" During the past two decades, students' scores have declined—"decades during which the federal presence in education grew and grew." This linkage was made even more explicit in the president's radio address four days later: "Bigger budgets are not the answer. Federal spending for education increased seventeen-fold during the same twenty years that marked such dramatic decline in quality." At a press conference eighteen days later (May 17, 1983) a still more detailed causal connection was offered; during the last ten years, he said, scores declined even as "we went from $760 million federal aid to education to about $14.9 billion, and that's a two-thousand percent increase."

Clearly, the commission's report had failed to give sufficient prominence to facts that lead to a quite different conclusion. By far the largest part of the federal funds to education at the elementary and secondary level went not to programs designed to increase scores, but to non-academic, mandated, social-agenda programs such as nutrition, or to successful efforts to reduce the dropout rate through programs in vocational and bilingual education and help for handicapped children. The exceptions were the federal funds targeted for basic skills, which in fact paid off handsomely in terms of better test scores (as for the nine-year-olds in Title I programs). Even so, the growth of federal funding in the last decade was not so large considering the addition of major new non-academic programs. The budget of the U.S. Office of Education in fiscal year 1972 was in fact

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not $760 million but $5.1 billion; allowing for inflation during the ensuing decade, the real increase was thus not 2,000 percent, but more nearly 50 percent.

Moreover, the report could have dwelled on the historical fact that from the Morrill Act of 1862 to the GI bill, and in the years that followed, federal aid to education was a bipartisan matter. Many main programs were launched in the Nixon years, and were supported by President Ford. Conservative law-makers, such as Representative Ashbrook of Ohio and Senator Stafford of Vermont, staunchly defended the key sections of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

However, the figures, even if explained and corrected, would not by themselves be decisive in shaping educational policy today. What counts most is that there appears to be a change from the set of fundamental presuppositions shared in varying degrees by Presidents Eisenhower, Johnson, Nixon, and Ford, concerning the need to stimulate quality education. The newly operative presuppositions are indicated in the remarks of Secretary of Education Bell; in April 1982, he said that the long-range strategy of the federal government should be to enhance the capacity of others to carry out the responsibility to education. "Ultimate success," he noted, would be "the termination of federal funding." We thus stand on wholly new ground in the battle between competing theories of how to bring about desired social change.

There have been times when effective educational reforms in the traditional sense became preoccupying issues for the nation. This happened in the North and Midwest before the Civil War; in the crusades for improved education in Southern states between 1902 and 1910. At other times, as in the 1960s and 1970s, the movement for school reform attached itself to and merged with other reform movements, important and meaningful in themselves, without putting primary emphasis on quality education as traditionally understood. We are now, I think, at a fork in the road. The potential for strong and long-lasting action exists, but which of two quite different directions we will take is not at all clear. On one side, the main motivation appears to be the removal of the federal presence, the introduction of religious and other private value concerns, and an increasing localization and privatization of pre-college education. On

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the other side, in a variety of overlapping visions, there is a set of more conventional goals. According to the first view, great hopes are placed in exemplars that are expected to challenge and motivate enough individuals to succeed in our society, because there is already a sufficient degree of opportunity and reason to believe that more growth is coming. On the other view, the system is seen as far too imperfect to be left alone as we move into an uncertain future; a relatively small but crucial infusion of energy, leadership, planning, and funding must come from the national government; and there is a greater sense of urgency to accomplish relatively large improvements.

As things stand today, if one had to bet on the likely outcome of this contest, one might well choose to place one's money on the success of the Exemplarians rather than the Systematists. The former are probably smaller in number, but they are well-placed and more united. The latter are severely divided: incrementalists against revolutionaries; those who see schools as the proper, perhaps even primary vehicle for necessary social development against those who think schools have never known how to do anything well, except, occasionally, to teach academic subjects.

The Exemplarians do not have to worry very much about the resistances in the system. As Chester E. Finn, Jr. explains in a recent article entitled, significantly, "The Excellence Backlash," changes of the sort the systemic reformers advocate are likely to fall victim to a "full-fledged backlash" that has already started among the various segments of the "education establishment." Principled and high-minded though it may be, the backlash is taking any one of ten forms that Finn develops in substantial detail. Even if the "excellence movement" survives for several more years, Finn sees three almost unresolvable problems built into the system: the sorry state of teacher quality, the politics of enforcing standards by which more children fail to pass and are made to repeat subjects, and the lack of institutional mechanisms to maintain public pressure for better schools.

* * *

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One must hope that I shall lose that bet, just as I hope that Finn will be proved wrong on many of his somber points. But on his last it is hard to be optimistic. As I look back, three years after first becoming involved first in the commission's work, one lesson stands out above all others. There is a basic structural defect in American education that greatly contributes to the confusion and fragility of the national mandate. Despite all the studies and emotion lavished on education, in one important respect it is not too much to say that our young people remain the most neglected fraction of the population. Our country's basic federal laws are so structured that any attention Congress and the administration gives to the needs of the young flows from the temporary triumph of good impulses or the sudden excitement of an easily comprehended challenge, not from the continuing necessity of law. If the Constitution and the Tenth Amendment are interpreted narrowly, as is now the fashion, one cannot be surprised by the movement to phase out most or all federal responsibility for education. Education is not mentioned in the Federalist Papers or in the Constitution. The whole issue was not seen as central to the life and destiny of a people, although one ought to remember that Thomas Jefferson, in asking Congress for a remedy, said: "An amendment of our Constitution must here come in aid of the public education. The influence on government must be shared by all the people."

The omission was natural two centuries ago. We may properly be thankful that we have not been burdened with a solution that would now be outdated. Two hundred years ago, what one learned in the first twelve years of life would, for most, provide sufficient orientation for the rest of their existence. This was appropriate for a rural America, with a relatively small population, surrounded by boundless resources and protecting oceans. But history produces new conditions for personal and national survival. We are living elbow to elbow among determined and strongly motivated competitors—competitors not only in seeking economic or territorial advantage, but in providing models for modern society itself. Under this condition, access to quality education for every young person cannot be built simply on the transient goodwill of local, state, and federal legislators and agencies.

Thus I have come to view that in the long run the health of our schools will not depend at any given time chiefly on how many more

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hours of history or mathematics are taught, or whether higher scores are attained in literacy tests, or even on the number of excellent teachers recruited. For all this could soon collapse again. Without a device that encourages cumulative improvement over the long haul, without a built-in mandate to identify and promote the national interest in education as well as to "help fund and support efforts to protect and promote that interest"—in the clumsily-phrased but critical section of the commission report—we shall go to sleep again between Sputnik and Honda. If the reform movement does survive, the question to be addressed is how to use the present momentum to put into place, during the next few years, something like a moral equivalent to a "right-to-education" clause, a commitment that will continue to live in the periods between those sporadic and exhausting battles that are a necessary condition of political life in a democracy.

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Patricia Albjerg Graham

Schools: Cacophony About Practice, Silence About Purpose

WHY SHOULD WE EDUCATE? What are the benefits that individuals legitimately should expect from education? What are the benefits that society should expect from an educated citizenry? Are these benefits in conflict or are they mutually reinforcing? How can we achieve them?

Public purposes for education change as the society perceives its needs and priorities differently. Currently our old educational shibboleths have been rejected but new ones have not yet been accepted. The critique of contemporary educational processes is intense, but there is little articulate reformulation of either educational goals or of the means to achieve them.

Writing recently in the *New York Review of Books,* Andrew Hacker commented on the several commission reports and books that have appeared over the last year decrying the state of educational practice in American high schools.

> At this point, all we can say with certainty is that no one really knows how far classroom education contributes to the kind of people we ultimately become. But if the schools leave a lot to be desired, the quality of educational commentary has declined even further. We no longer have commanding figures like John Dewey and Robert Hutchins, who, in their different ways, tried to create a vision of an educated citizenry whose members would have some chance at something that could be called the good life. That this goal, however nebulous, is all but absent from current books and reports is far more disconcerting than our lag in teaching algorithms to restless teenagers.[1]

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Hacker is correct, I believe, in pointing to the recent dearth of educational commentary comparable to that of Dewey or Hutchins, but there surely has been no shortage of critiques. As Hacker himself observes, "Having been through the mill ourselves, we all feel entitled to expound on education. So, too, we believe that the schools belong to us, and hence we have the right to set them straight."[2]

Indeed, we do have a particularly strong feeling of ownership of our schools, as we should, and many of us who write as part of our way of life feel compelled to write about the schools. Invariably we find them wanting, not providing as good an education for today's youth as we recall they provided for us. That our vision may be skewed either through selective recollection or by the narrowness of our own experience does not trouble us greatly. We often do not remember the fate of others, be they the handicapped child the teacher never called on, the two black kids who were in our first-grade class but somehow were never in another class with us, or the junior-high cut-up who was pumping gas a couple of years later. When some of us attend reunions of our high-school graduating class, we are reminded that the homeroom of the forty who graduated had been three homerooms of forty each in the eighth grade. In short, those of us who "have been through the mill ourselves" and who feel compelled to write about education are likely to be the ones whom the educational system served well. We recall how well it did for us without considering whether it did similarly well for others our age. Judging from what historical evidence we have from reading tests, library usage, and college attendance, it did not serve these others well.

Despite the rose-colored lenses with which successful graduates sometimes view their past education and the clarity with which they point to its deficiencies today, these authors have labored valiantly with their critiques, which are, on balance, beneficial to both the schools and the society. Although the reports do not meet high standards of policy analysis, as Paul Peterson persuasively argues in *The Brookings Review,* what they have done is focus public attention on a matter of urgency, namely, improving the education of our youth.[3]

Schools traditionally have reinforced the advantages that children bring with them as a result of both their genetic and environmental circumstances. In the years since World War II, however, we have

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said that we expect them to transform their role of reinforcing advantage to one of maximizing the talent available in the population. To do the latter, to maximize talent, schools must undertake revisions in the curriculum and pedagogy so that children who have not mastered the material in the past can master it now. In recent years we have simply assumed that attendance and graduation implied mastery of material. We have learned, to our regret, that such is not the case. To shift the role of the schools from reinforcing advantage to maximizing talent requires both social will and educational expertise. Of the two, social will is more difficult to achieve. What the reports and critiques have done is to begin to mobilize the social will that is essential if educational expertise is to effect a transformation.[4] When Ross Perot takes on the high school athletic establishment in Texas, he may not do so with an elegant policy analysis, but his efforts to modify the priorities in schools may result in real change. Such would be an example of social will.

The reports, then, play an important role in rallying public opinion about the significance of schools and of the importance for children and society to learn in them. This is a necessary function, a prerequisite for the task yet to be accomplished, namely, a forceful discussion of what schools ought to be doing and how they ought to be doing it. That is the commentary that Hacker correctly finds lacking.

As in the days of Hutchins and Dewey—one a lawyer turned university president and the other a philosopher and professor—we expect professional educators to lead such a discussion. Yet today, when derogatory jokes about minorities and even women are considered in bad taste, jokes can still be made with relative impunity about educators. This attitude, coupled with the bad press educators have received in recent years, has had serious consequences.

In the material that follows I will argue that the professional autonomy of educators has been severely eroded and that one effect of that erosion has been silence from them on questions of why we should educate. In the absence of a coherent and audible message about the rationale or purpose of education from today's professional educators, the governing educational philosophy on which practice is implicitly based remains the remnants of progressive education, which was the explicit message of a previous generation of educators. I will argue that the time has come for educators to emerge

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from this dark night of the soul, to find their voice, to join the discussion, and to argue, as only they can, what they believe that schools ought to do and how they ought to do it.

During the last thirty years, those responsible for schools, their rationale and their practice, have seen their autonomy remarkably diminished. A number of factors have accounted for the demise in the autonomy of educators. A preeminent factor is the success of educators in educating other Americans so that school officials are no longer part of a tiny minority who have successfully navigated the rocks and shoals of the college curriculum. In 1950, only 6 percent of Americans over twenty-five years old had completed college and only one-third had finished high school. In such an environment educators stood apart as experts, unlikely to be challenged in their professional judgments by the majority who had substantially less educational expertise than they. Today such professional educators are victims of their own and their colleagues' success. Currently, 18 percent of educators have finished college, and over 70 percent of adult Americans have completed high school.[5] Within one generation the proportion of college graduates has tripled, and that of high-school graduates more than doubled. Among younger adult Americans, the ones traditionally most likely to be directly interested in educational issues, increases in educational level are even higher. Persons with extensive educational experience themselves are much more likely to challenge professional judgments of educators than those without it. Hence, the previous autonomy of educators is progressively constrained.

Second, the years since World War II have been turbulent ones for educators simply because of the internal problems they have faced within their own institutions. This has been a period of feast and famine, both for enrollments and for funds. For the generation preceding World War II, enrollment levels in public elementary and secondary schools held relatively steady at 26 million. Largely as a consequence of the dramatic increase in the birth rate during and after World War II, and partly as a consequence of increased retention in high schools, enrollments grew to 36 million in academic year 1959-60, to 46 million in 1969-70, peaking at 46.1 million in fall 1971. By the 1979-80 school year, enrollment had fallen to 41.6 million. Current enrollment is just under 40 million.[6]

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With these changes in enrollment came commensurate changes in funds. Total public-school revenues in the 1920s and 1930s were around $2 billion annually, but with the enrollment increases after the war they escalated to over $5.4 billion in 1949-50, nearly tripled a decade later to $14.7 billion, jumped to $40 billion in 1969-70, and rose again to $96 billion in 1979-80. The increase, however, masks a decline in purchasing power beginning in 1978 and a decline in adjusted dollars in teachers' salaries over the last decade.[7]

The colleges and universities that trained school personnel prospered as states increased educational requirements for teachers. In 1940, 40 percent of city schoolteachers and 62 percent of rural teachers taught without a bachelor's degree. By 1971, over 97 percent of all teachers had a bachelor's degree, and 27 percent had a master's degree. Teacher training in the colleges grew from just over 36,000 baccalaureate education graduates in 1948, reaching its peak in 1973 when nearly 164,000 received bachelor's degrees in education. By 1979, that number had dropped to just under 108,000 and recent evidence indicates that the decline is continuing. The academic training of administrators has been more extensive than that of teachers. The numbers of doctorates awarded in education grew dramatically, from 470 in 1940 to 1,549 in 1960 to a peak of 7,955 in 1976.[8]

If enrollments grow, so must faculties, facilities, and funds. Thus, educators' concerns focused on problems of expansion: accommodating the many new students, finding the faculty to instruct them, constructing the buildings to house them, finding the funds to support this enterprise. Educators correctly saw many of their immediate problems as solvable by money, and many of their immediate problems were. Such an environment is not one that is conducive to speculation about purposes of education since the practicalities of schooling typically take precedence over such theoretical activity.

The turbulence affecting the educational institutions manifested itself in yet another way: in dissension between students and faculty and in dissension between faculty and administration. Although the issue of students' rights was a troublesome one, likely to involve administrators in even more litigation or the threat of it, it was not as divisive as the spectacle of the split between teachers and administrators in contract negotiations and strikes. The public had assumed,

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sometimes incorrectly, that teachers and administrators were on the same team, that they had the same goals—the education of children.

No one outside education noticed much when the umbrella organization of elementary and secondary education, the National Education Association, began to splinter. In 1892, it had involved college and university faculty and administrators in formulating the Committee of Ten report on high-school curriculum under the leadership of Charles W. Eliot, then president of Harvard University. By 1937, however, its Department of Superintendence became a separate organization, the American Association of School Administrators, an organization totally separate from the NEA and on some issues completely opposed to it. The only higher education people left in the NEA were a few professors of education; presidents of Harvard or comparable universities did not spend what time they had for elementary and secondary education issues with the NEA.

In 1961, New York City recognized the United Federation of Teachers, an affiliate of the American Federation of Teachers, as the bargaining agent for its public school faculty. Subsequently, during four autumns in the 1960s, New Yorkers and the rest of the nation were exposed to the sight of teachers striking, sometimes joined in opposition to the policies of the Board of Education by the local community and sometimes the reverse. By the late sixties and seventies, teachers' strikes were common throughout the United States. They occurred not just in cities, but in small communities as well, and were led not just by the American Federation of Teachers, which clearly identified itself with the American labor movement, but with considerable frequency by the NEA, that bastion of professionalism of teachers. While such activities undoubtedly led to increases in shamefully low teacher salaries, they also contributed to an adversarial relationship between faculty and administration so that, in the mind of at least much of the public, the united force of educators appeared fractured.

Such factionalism within the profession led to new specializations at colleges and universities that prepared educators. Preeminent among these was management training for school administrators. One of the most popular emerging fields was negotiation strategy. There was no doubt that an administrator needed such skills. Management training was also more compelling to many students than much of the traditional work in the philosophy or history of

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education, which often suffered from charges of irrelevance in an era when relevance was triumphant. The late-twentieth-century analogue to the history or philosophy of education became policy studies. Here the emphasis was upon analysis, a systematic and careful look at what the policy was and what its effects were. Few such rigorous analysts believed their task extended to considering what the purposes underlying the policy ought to be. Rather, policies were examined for their political feasibility, ease of implementation, consequences for the affected parties. By studying social policy toward education, one encountered some of the issues traditionally considered in studies of history or philosophy but one did so in a much more compelling contemporary context than that of Aristotle, Rousseau, or even John Dewey. One wasn't troubled, except by an example or two, by the arguments of the Federalists that portions of the populace of the new republic be educated. Lessons from the school consolidation movement and the elimination of rural schools could be skipped. Finally, professors of education—often located at universities in which scientific, empirical research was highly valued and who might once have considered normative questions about the purpose of education—found themselves undertaking numerous and often quantitative research projects if they wished to receive either tenure or, particularly, national recognition. The days when outstanding figures in education such as John Dewey, Boyd Bode, George Counts, or Charles Judd, were outspoken about what education *ought* to be, had passed. Now they engaged in meta-analyses of what someone else had found had already happened.

The professional autonomy of educators in formulating what education ought to do was profoundly reduced in the years following World War II as the result of the increased role of the federal government in matters educational. To put the matter simply—too simply, perhaps—the federal government has been primarily concerned about two issues in elementary and secondary schooling since World War II: assuring educational civil rights to groups deemed to be underserved, particularly racial minorities, females, the handicapped, and children of the poor (many of whom overlapped with the above categories); and providing a small, ill-fated attempt to enliven the academic curriculum in mathematics, science, and, to a lesser extent, social studies. In both cases, the federal government believed that its actions were intended as correctives to the efforts of

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state and local educational authorities that had primary responsibility for the direction, control, and financing of the public schools. Federal funds also went to support vocational education and to provide money for school districts with large concentrations of federal employees, but those programs were protected by powerful political coalitions and largely escaped any serious critical attention from thoughtful professionals.

Neither in the case of civil rights nor the curriculum did the federal government address the fundamental, central issues of public schooling, namely, what ought to be the education provided for the 90 percent of American young people in the public schools? The federal government spoke specifically about failings—about deficiencies—of current educational policy and practice. It disapproved of segregation by race, of lack of access of girls into studies dominated by boys, of isolation of handicapped children from others in classrooms, of the lower performances of children of the poor in academic achievement, and of old-fashioned science and mathematics curricula that failed to prepare gifted youngsters adequately for professional achievement in those fields. In all cases, federal activity in precollegiate education came from perceived inadequacies of the education currently being conducted under the direction of state and local authorities. The federal strategy was one of intervention when in the minds of federal authorities—minds stimulated by political realities as well as educational ones—the state and local authorities were failing in particular aspects of their assignment to educate the youth of America.

Despite the federal reticence to formulate clear goals and purposes for education in America, the effect of federal activity has been to affect significantly what school people thought and did about education. The influence of the federal government was indirect but powerful. Though government rarely supplied even a tenth of a school system's budget, its impact on decisions in schools dramatically exceeded that relatively minor proportion of the school budget.

The federal impact was great for two principal reasons. To avoid the institutional migraines that would result from a failure to comply with federal procedures, many school officials spent valuable time seeking that exceedingly narrow and obscure path through the forest of federal regulations and community sentiment. Second, the federal regulations and appropriations represented to some extent manifestations of national purpose in education. There was never absolute

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consensus about educational goals, but, aided by decisions of the Supreme Court, a consensus gradually began to develop regarding the illegality of de jure segregation of the races in public schools and the unequal treatment of women.

At the end of World War II, these matters were not ones that the vast majority of school superintendents, school-board members, professors at prestigious schools of education, or national leaders by themselves would likely have ranked as pressing educational issues. These groups were not composed of minority-group members or women, and many were not deeply concerned about opportunities for these two classes of citizens. The implicit assumption was that educators and national leaders were selected for responsible positions more or less on the basis of their merit. Consequently, if they achieved because of their merit—and others had failed to achieve presumably because of their absence of merit—then society and the educational system that reflected its values were working reasonably well. These educators did not enjoy being first told, and then forced, to change their ways. The federal government found itself in the awkward position of telling those people with the primary responsibility for running schools that they were not doing a good job with certain school populations their institutions were supposed to serve. These school folks had to mend their ways, particularly with staffs who, like themselves, had not always shared either the commitment to the education of these new populations or the expertise to educate them effectively.

For thirty years since the *Brown* v. *Board of Education* decision in 1954, American educators in communities throughout the nation have been attempting to build local support for and find the resources within their own institutions to address the complicated civil rights questions in education that were triggered by federal actions. On the educational level alone they have done reasonably well, particularly with elementary-school students. The society itself has done less well, although the evolution of an expanded minority middle class and diminished occupational segregation for educated women has improved the economic prospects of individuals in those groups substantially.

The argument thus far has been that the autonomy of educators has been substantially reduced in the years since World War II. One

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caveat must be added, namely, that the federal authorities who so influenced the course of American education by their insistence upon special attention to the needs of the racial minorities, the poor, and the handicapped were not disembodied bureaucrats pursuing some power trip to impose their views on unsuspecting and unsympathetic local educators. Rather, to a very important extent, those notorious "feds" were themselves educators, persons who in their previous employment had served as teachers, principals, school superintendents, professors, or deans of schools of education, and many returned to their former positions or comparable ones following their federal service. During their employment with the federal government, they undertook to achieve through its authority many of the educational reforms in which they had been interested but impotent to implement in their local communities. The dean of the Harvard Graduate School of Education, however concerned he or she might be about the education of the children of the poor, was unlikely to be as effective in getting federal funds authorized and appropriated to provide supplementary instruction in reading and arithmetic for them as was the commissioner of the United States Office of Education. This was a phenomenon that Francis Keppel discovered when he moved from the former position to the latter. Keppel's successor as commissioner, Harold Howe II, was much more effective in bringing about school desegregation, a matter of long concern to him, than he would have been in his previous post as superintendent of schools in Scarsdale, New York. Clearly not all federal officials who were insisting on these new educational arrangements were either as high-minded or highly placed as Keppel or Howe, but the issues on which they tussled with their erstwhile colleagues in the states and localities were ones that were fundamentally important to the nation's vitality.

These issues were vital because in each case the federal initiatives and regulations sought to rescue talent lost both to individuals and to the nation as a result of children not being educated adequately in the schools. What do we mean by "adequacy in schooling"? Adequacy in schooling is a notion like "poverty in America." Its definition is relative and changes regularly, generally escalating. Standards of adequacy in schooling are much higher now than they were in 1935 or 1940. We expect schools to reach a much greater proportion of children for much longer periods of time and to teach them—all of them—much more than we previously did. Similarly, as James

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Patterson has argued in *America's Struggle Against Poverty, 1900-1980*, we have much higher minimum standards that we believe all persons should meet in diet, housing, plumbing, heating, and clothing now than we did earlier.[9] In both cases we believe that these higher standards are both beneficial to the individual and appropriate or even beneficial to the society. So, too, with adequacy of schooling.

Since World War II, we have repeatedly heard that our schools were inadequate. Parents and groups concerned with special populations (minorities, girls, handicapped, gifted) have persistently and effectively reminded school people that the needs of their individual children were not being met. Their remarks have often been addressed to the federal authorities in an effort for them to intervene on behalf of these children, and to a substantial degree they have done so. The educational protest literature, a prolific genre from the publication of Arthur Bestor's *Educational Wastelands* in 1953 to the National Commission on Excellence's *A Nation at Risk* in 1983, has concentrated upon the general deficiencies of the schools, citing weakened curricular offerings, poorly prepared teachers, and insipid educational goals.[10] The critiques of both the special interest groups and the general protesters have converged to assert that the schools were not accomplishing what the critics believed *ought* to be occurring in the classrooms. Ultimately this was probably the definitive factor limiting the autonomy of the professional educators; the public had lost confidence in the institutions they operated, but the public had not lost confidence in the enterprise they represented, namely, the education of the young. The issue yet to be defined was what that education ought to be.

But who was defining "ought"? What was the source of the reigning wisdom that was intended to govern educational policy and practice in the schools? Given their recent loss of autonomy, professional educators were not providing a definition, and nobody else was either.

To a remarkable degree, practice in schools in the 1980s still owes much to the rhetoric of progressivism in education first popularized in the first half of the twentieth century. No one today would likely describe a comprehensive high school with its variegated curriculum, its movable classroom desks, and its acceptance of the limited authority of the teacher as a school following the canons of progres-

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sive education. Nonetheless, the practices of American high schools so much criticized today in the works of John Goodlad, Ernest Boyer, Diane Ravitch, or in the various reports issued in 1983, are embodiments of progressivism in education gone amuck.[11]

The lag time between acceptance of an educational ideal and its widespread acceptance as educational practice is great. When Horace Mann advocated the adoption of a common school movement in Massachusetts in the late 1830s and early 1840s, he was arguing for a notion that did not reach full realization in the nation until the turn of the century. Many midwestern states entered the age of the common school at the end of the nineteenth century, not at the middle of it, as the historiography of the period, dictated by Mann and Henry Barnard's pronouncements, would have it.

The canons of progressivism were introduced to the general public by the turn of the century in the work of the early vocational education (then called manual training) leaders: by Francis Parker with his concern for the centrality of the child in the educational process, and by John Dewey whose work unified concern for the child and the curriculum as well as for the school and the society.[12] Together these educators fought what they believed was the tyranny of the classical or traditional curriculum that dominated school organization and that, in the minds of many of them, forced children into a rigid mold that was not useful for them in later life. Their intentions were honorable in many ways, attempting to right the balance between acquisition of knowledge and attention to children's needs. The excessive formalism of schooling dominated by pedants and characterized by mastery of what many believed to be useless knowledge held sway. The newly recognized concerns for the development of the child received relatively little attention in practice.

Recognition did begin to emerge for schooling that would be appropriate for the children's "probable destinies." Charles William Eliot used this term in an article, "Industrial Education as an Essential Factor in our National Prosperity," in the *National Society for the Promotion of Industrial Education Bulletin* in 1908. As Eliot explained it, "The teachers of the elementary schools ought to sort the pupils and sort them by their evident or probable destinies."[13] This was guidance the emerging group of vocational educators found very congenial and supportive of their cause.

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Surely it was reasonable for turn-of-the-century educational reformers to protest a curriculum that was too rigid, that ignored children's individual differences, that failed to engage the majority of the children so that they neither learned the material nor remained in school. The question, however, is the extent to which those recommendations are time-bound and context-bound or the extent to which they are universal. The progressives, Dewey particularly, stressed the necessity for adapting remedies to the needs of the times. Their successors, however, acted as though the principles set forth by the progressives were ultimate ones, not ones conditioned by the circumstances of late-nineteenth-century America.

Following World War I, a new generation of educational reformers, augmented by the continuing presence of John Dewey, preached the doctrine of progressive education. The primary pulpit was Teachers College at Columbia University, where William Heard Kilpatrick, Harold Rugg, and such practitioners as Patty Smith Hill and Otis Caldwell expounded. Their doctrine was child-centeredness, the antithesis of subject-centeredness. They took pride in advocating the centrality of the child in the educational process rather than the subject matter, which in their view had formerly and mistakenly occupied center stage. They stressed needed changes in pedagogy that would make learning more active, less passive, than it traditionally had been in classes dominated by teachers and textbooks. By the 1930s, their colleague at Teachers College, George S. Counts, was encouraging the schools to play a major role in bringing about changes in the society that would reflect collectivist principles, not the capitalist ones on which the society had been based as it tumbled into the depression.[14] Like most of us who advocate a point of view, these educators wrote within the context of their time and their experience. Vocational education, child-centeredness, the rigidity of traditional curriculum, or the viability of capitalism in the 1930s: all were reasonable concerns for educators in the first third of the twentieth century whose educational practice was dominated by reverence for traditional texts that were accessible to only a few students and of interest to only a fraction of those few.

The progressive educators, as they came to be known, expressed their views in the pages of their new journals, particularly *Progressive Education* and *Social Frontier,* at professional meetings of the Progressive Education Association and the National Education As-

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sociation, and in the classrooms, especially at Teachers College, which was filled with eager teachers seeking to be both professional and progressive. "Professional" and "progressive" came to be nearly synonymous terms for many modern educators in the pre-World-War-II years.

The enunciation of these doctrines and the enthusiastic acceptance of them by many ambitious educators did not, however, immediately transfer their practices into all the schoolrooms of America. Vocational education, which was intended for the poor and those unlikely to remain in school, was introduced to America, Lawrence Cremin tells us in *The Transformation of the School,* in 1876.[15] By World War I, it had made significant inroads in the curriculum of many schools, but even vocational education did not reach widespread audiences until after passage of the Smith-Hughes Act in 1917. Roughly fifty years after the ideas were introduced the practices began to change broadly. So also with some of the other tenets of progressive education, which were argued forcefully in the 1920s. Examples of "progressive practices" could be found in such hothouse environments as New York City private schools (Dalton, Walden, City and Country, Elisabeth Irwin) and some wealthy suburban districts (Winnetka and Bronxville) in the years between the wars. David Tyack, Robert Lowe, and Elisabeth Hansot discuss the belated universality of progressive practices in *Public Schools in Hard Times,* forcefully exemplifying their view with a vignette of a Hamilton, Massachusetts, elementary school serving a predominantly lower-middle-class population in the 1930s.[16]

The widespread acceptance of progressive practices in education probably did not occur until after World War II, by which time the ideology of progressive education was already under attack. Thus, educational practice in the 1970s, much lamented by current critics, owes its philosophic origins to a misinterpretation of the child-centeredness first proposed half a century earlier. Its persistence in schools today is a consequence of two phenomena: the inevitable lag in time between the enunciation of a popular or powerful principle and its widespread acceptance in practice, and the decline in autonomy of professional educators who otherwise might have been expected to reformulate or revise goals and purposes for the schools.

Probably no finer education could be imagined for a child than progressive education at its best. Under those circumstances an

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intelligent, informed, creative, sympathetic teacher guides children individually and in groups through academic material in ways that trigger their interest and imagination, and lead to their ultimate understanding of the subject, its structure and significance. Most of us would seek such an education for our children. But too often—in fact, most often—progressive education was not at its best, not fully achieved.

Progressive education, partially achieved, was a disaster, and it was disastrous for two reasons. First, it focused upon the child and the perceived needs and interests of the child, thereby galvanizing the iron cloak of race, class, ethnicity, and sex as determinants of the child's future. Second, it minimized mastery of traditional subject matter as insignificant, thereby eliminating the prime educational means by which children could choose a future different from the circumstances into which they had been born.

Certainly focus upon the child should be a component of education, but it must be perceived as a necessary but not sufficient condition for that child's education. When the antithesis of child-centered was adult-centered—that is, schools organized for the benefit of the adults in them, rather than the children—then to strive for a focus on children is clearly appropriate. A child who is hungry cannot learn arithmetic easily; a child who is psychologically troubled will find it difficult to study anything attentively. School people are correct in observing that the children who come to them today to be educated are more difficult to educate than those whom they saw in the past. The reason is relatively simple: they did not see the difficult ones in the past because they dropped, or were pushed, out of school.

To concentrate too narrowly on the child and the child's problems that may be numerous and compelling, however, permits the school to limit its attention to the circumstances of the child's life and to run the risk of accepting the stereotype associated with the child's race, class, ethnicity, and sex. Recognizing individual differences was a hallmark of progressive rhetoric, but too often under the guise of such recognition of individualism was in fact a reinforcement of expectations associated not with the individual child but with the child's external circumstances. Noticing that a child was learning to read slowly, and knowing that the child came from a poor family,

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was likely to result in placement of that child in the "slow track" where in all likelihood that child would remain, regularly slipping further and further behind his age-mates in school. Such was particularly likely to be the case if the child were a member of a racial minority. It was expected that such children often did not do well in school, and there was plenty of evidence from psychologists and psychometricians documenting the lower scores of blacks and Hispanics on "objective tests." In such circumstances, concern for the child led not to increased learning but to acceptance of expected poor performance.

The explanation was rarely in terms of the inadequacy of the child, for that would have been too damning, but rather in terms of the inadequacy of the child's environment. "Culturally deprived" was the euphemism to describe such matters. Somehow we did not find it as damning to blame a society that permitted people to live in poverty without hope as we did to blame the individual. Fundamentally, we simply did not set expectations as high for some children as for others, and our level of expectations, though ostensibly tied to concern for the child, was, in fact, influenced significantly by the child's race, sex, and socioeconomic circumstances. In such a manner, concern for the welfare of the child, which could have been enormously liberating, became a constriction. Yet as late as 1970, a person as well-established as a Yale professor, Charles A. Reich, provided support for this notion of individuality, apparently oblivious to the social factors that impinge upon educational opportunities. "Each person has his own individuality, not to be compared to that of anyone else. Someone may be a brilliant thinker, but he is not 'better' at thinking than anyone else, he simply possesses his own excellence. A person who thinks very poorly is still excellent in his own way."[17] This became the late-twentieth-century academic rationale for Harvard president Charles William Eliot's 1908 recommendation that schools sort children according to "evident or probable destinies." Such popular expressions as this gave school people confidence that they were not damaging children's opportunities by focusing their attention upon the child.

One of the few canons that progressive educators agreed upon was their antipathy to the tyranny of traditional subject matter. They were "anti–subject-centeredness," as they frequently asserted. Sometimes the antithesis of child-centered was not adult-centered but

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rather subject-centered. Certainly being child-centered in the school was absolutely consistent with being opposed to being subject-centered. In fact, the former necessitated the latter.

Progressive educators' hostility to academic subject matter was understandable in an age of extensive memorization of miscellaneous and sometimes erroneous information, as much of the late-nineteenth-century curriculum required. By the mid-years of the twentieth century, however, the consensus about what the curriculum ought to include was gone. To continue to be hostile to subject matter was no longer a valid corrective to a narrow view of significant knowledge. Rather, it was an abdication of professional responsibility. Surely, one of a professional educator's primary obligations is to determine what children need to learn in school. As Clifford Adelman has illustrated in his study of high-school transcripts, the academic curriculum for grades nine to twelve has virtually collapsed. It has been replaced in some significant part by "personal service and development courses," some of which are even state-mandated, thereby indicating the complicity of state officials in the disappearance of academic study in the high school.[18]

The demise of the academic curriculum in the high school is due, in part, to the progressive rhetoric that gave approval for study of many things not previously thought justifiable as part of school learning. From the beginning, such "expansions" of the curriculum, as they were frequently called, gave rise to criticism. One Italian immigrant mother quoted by Caroline Ware in her study of Greenwich Village residents in the 1920s shrewdly observed that teaching social adjustment in school was a luxury that could be afforded only by the children of the rich.[19]

During the 1930s, the Progressive Education Association sponsored two major commissions underwritten by funding from the Carnegie Corporation and the General Education Board. The first, the Commission on the Relation of School and College, involved thirty schools, mostly serving college-bound students, and followed their academic records for eight years. The principal finding of this commission, widely heralded in the educational press, was that students who attended progressive schools that had non-traditional curricula did as well in college as did students who had conventional preparation. This conviction was broadly but erroneously conceived to mean that what you studied did not make any difference. The

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second commission, an outgrowth of the former, developed this line of reasoning further. The Commission on the Secondary School Curriculum, which published its principal work *Reorganizing Secondary Education* in 1939, maintained, in rhetoric typical of the period, that democracy should be inseparable from school life, and that the "needs"—social, economic, and personal—of young people should determine the content of the curriculum.[20] Some of the special reports of the commission on specific fields of study were innovative, interesting, and provocative, and in the hands of the gifted teacher could be very useful and effective in introducing students to science and literature. Those, however, did not become as well known as the commission summary itself.

These reports on the high-school curriculum were based on college-bound students in the depths of the depression. That group constituted about 13 percent of the age group at that time and, it can be safely assumed, over-represented the affluent. These were the children with whom the schools have traditionally been most successful, those for whom the schools reinforced the advantages that the child brought to school. For them, then, the issue of the content of the curriculum was much less important than it was for the child whose home was less likely to nurture him intellectually. The college-bound child of the thirties would likely learn Greek mythology, American history, writing skills, and reading comprehension at home or at college even if the school curriculum did not include it. For the 87 percent who were not college bound, the content of the school curriculum was much more crucial.

Since the commission reports appeared just at the outbreak of World War II, other issues took precedence over high-school curriculum reform in the years immediately following their publication. By the 1950s and 1960s, however, the principles of the reports were accepted by many high-school educators. The educational protest literature of the late fifties testified to the widespread practice of curriculum based on "life-adjustment education," a notion originating with the leader of the earlier vocational education movement, Charles Prosser. Prosser maintained that since only a small minority of high school students were college bound (20 percent) and a comparable proportion able to undertake vocational education, the curriculum for the balance (the majority of 60 percent) should not be academic but rather should consist of instruction in matters that

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would help them adjust to life as they would likely lead it.[21] This was a revivification of a curriculum to sort children by "evident or probable destiny." Such was the justification for the introduction of courses on marriage and family life (since nearly everybody would be involved in that) and driver's education (since in the new automobile culture everybody would need that skill).

This view underwent a reincarnation under a different term with another former leading progressive educator, Sidney Marland, Jr., who had served with Carleton Washburne in the Winnetka schools when they exemplified the ideal of progressive education. When Marland became United States commissioner of education in the Nixon administration, he argued for a federal initiative to support "career education" that soon became "experience-based career education," a federal program that remained throughout the seventies. Marland's view was that most education should be tied to possible jobs, although he left some room for preparation for college. His chief target was "general education," which he believed, often correctly, was an academic mishmash. His solution, however, was not to invigorate it but to replace it with job-oriented studies.[22] The assumption underlying both was that academic learning, including such fundamentals as literature, mathematics, science, history, and foreign languages, was only intended for an elite. It was unnecessary for the masses who needed job skills. The echo of the Booker T. Washington–W.E.B. DuBois debate over the proper education of blacks at the turn of the century was now extended to whites and lingered on.

Unwittingly, perhaps, the colleges and universities themselves contributed to this diminution of the curriculum by significantly reducing entrance requirements for college freshmen, beginning with the age of relevance of the 1960s and continuing throughout the academic depression of the 1970s. The Ivy League, which had traditionally had the most rigid entrance requirements, began to be much less specific about what a student needed to have studied in high school, and other institutions, which were experiencing serious concern about getting enough students for a freshman class, did not pursue at length just what the content of the high school "communications" course was that had replaced English.

Even more significantly, colleges themselves reduced requirements for mastery of academic disciplines for graduation, thereby eliminat-

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ing the rationale for high-school disciplinary studies. In the Ivy League in the early 1960s, for example, typical requirements for the AB degree included evidence of satisfactory completion of the intermediate level in two foreign languages, two years of laboratory science, some history, and a respectable level of English composition, not to mention four semesters of physical education. By the end of the decade, one semester of English composition and the physical education requirement remained. Nationally, for example, in a sample of four-year institutions, 85 percent required a foreign language for graduation in 1969, but within seven years that figure had dropped to 54 percent. The typical pattern was one of drastic reduction of general education or distribution requirements for graduation. Students were likely to choose either subjects in their major field or ones closely related to it.[23] In the face of abandonment by the colleges of academic discipline requirements, the high schools, which understood all too well their lower rank in the educational pecking order, were unlikely to insist on those things colleges did not deem necessary.

Insofar as we have had, in recent years, an alternative rationale for education other than the child-centeredness, anti–subject-centeredness of the progressives, that rationale might be equality of opportunity. Certainly much of the rhetoric of the 1960s was filled with that phrase. "Equality of opportunity," however vital a concept, though, does not address the internal pedagogical and organizational questions of schooling. If equality of opportunity means that poor black children and rich white ones can both attend a school in which they take courses that will help them adjust to life according to their probable destinies, then the disparities in genuine educational opportunity remain great.

For equality of opportunity to become real, the content of the curriculum available to all children must enable and encourage them to become *more* than they thought they could be. The essence of opportunity is not "probable destiny" but an increase of the options available to a child. A curriculum that prepares one for one's "evident or probable destiny" does not encourage a child to pursue options that seem unlikely to him or to her. The essence of the curriculum must be to expand children's understanding of the world so that their destinies may be truly chosen, not simply a consequence of their circumstances of birth. Some may choose their "evident or probable

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destiny," and for them as well as for those who choose an improbable destiny the curriculum will be one that expands their horizons, not limits them.

Such a curriculum is likely to require mastery of English, familiarity and understanding of well written and difficult pieces of literature, mathematical reasoning, principles and practical examples of scientific accomplishments, knowledge of the past, and a foreign language. The pedagogy for accomplishing these demanding requirements will vary greatly among children, but the variance needs to be with the pedagogy, not with the rigor or content of the curriculum.

Historically, when we felt obligated to teach children to whom academic learning did not come easily, we modified the curriculum to make it easier for them to learn, or to make it—as Eliot urged—appropriate for their probable destiny. That tactic needs to be changed. The curriculum needs to remain constant, but the pedagogy of teaching it must be altered. The responsibility needs to shift from the student to the teacher. We have traditionally argued that in a child-centered school, we would have the curriculum modified to fit the child. Now we need to modify the pedagogy, the teacher's task, to meet the child's learning style. The curriculum, filled with the subjects that do endure and do enlighten a child, needs to remain. The means of teaching it to all children will vary.

Discussion about either curriculum or pedagogy is vacuous unless we have some agreement about why we educate. Only then can we have some basis for decision about what the curriculum ought to be and how it should be taught to children. Therefore, we must break the silence about our rationale for education. Vital as it is to improve the curriculum and to modify the pedagogy so that all can learn, thus making equality of opportunity a reality and not a sham, we must also be able to enunciate what our purpose of education is. We especially need to be able to say to schools what their special function is.

The primary responsibility for our schools should be to nurture and to enhance the wit and the character of the young. Both wit and character are vital to this nation and to the individuals who comprise it. In this society, schools have the primary responsibility for stimulating the former, wit, while they have secondary responsibility for molding the latter, character.

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"Wit," Webster's unabridged dictionary tell us, is "mind, intellect, understanding, sense." Secondarily, says Webster, wit means "ingenuity, humor." The *Oxford English Dictionary* calls it also "the faculty of thinking and reasoning." Surely those qualities, taken together as wit, provide both a lofty and laudable goal for schooling. By assuming such a goal for schooling we will be accepting the primacy of mind and intellect but also recognizing the crucial additions of understanding, sense, ingenuity, and humor. At its best, and even when not wholly achieved, those qualities are valuable for the young as they advance into maturity. How might high-school seniors today explain how their studies had improved their minds, intellects, understanding, sense, ingenuity, or humor? I fear that the present course of studies followed by many of them would leave those vital faculties singularly unattended. Various non-school experiences—reading, work, family life, friends—can contribute substantially, perhaps in totality even more than schools can, to the enhancement of wit, but no other agency in the society has primary responsibility for assuring that a child's wit is developed. This is not to argue that the school alone can adequately enhance a child's wit. It cannot, but if the school fails to make that its primary *goal*, it will have missed its fundamental calling.

This is not to say that wit alone is sufficient; the experience of the Weimar Republic is enough to demonstrate that. Of the two qualities, wit and character, certainly character is the more important of the two, but the schools' responsibility for forming character is subsidiary to that of the family and perhaps even the community. Nonetheless, any schooling that does not recognize the need for enhancement of character is inadequate. Character, to follow Webster again, means "strength of mind, individuality, independence, moral quality." The *Oxford English Dictionary* succinctly terms it "the sum of the moral and mental qualities which distinguish an individual . . . viewed as a homogeneous whole." These qualities, when combined with wit, are the fundamental qualities of citizenship—informed and enlightened citizenship. We may not always find individuality and independence to our taste or to our political persuasion, and certainly strength of mind is a quality we admire most when it reinforces our own views. Nonetheless, a society that depends upon each member for its governance needs these attributes. Few would be willing to argue against the necessity of moral quality,

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but as we have seen all too often in our own history, recognition of its virtue has been more common in words than in actions.

Although wit and character are not identical, undoubtedly efforts to stimulate and enhance both cannot be entirely separate. Wit and character are intertwined in the composition of the individual, and doubtless they must also be related in the school curriculum and pedagogy. Nonetheless, the school must recall the primacy of wit in its mission, and its secondary responsibility for character. In the past we have too often stressed the schools' obligations to make society moral (generally an unsuccessful venture) or the schools' use of the democratic process so that youngsters can replicate their school experiences later as adults and citizens in this democratic republic. Our schools have had a penchant for character formation, a hesitancy to tackle wit.

How would our schools change if they were to accept enhancing wit and nurturing character as their primary goals? Some, perhaps a good many, would not change much at all because whether they call it that or not, that is what they are presently doing. Others, and I believe the majority of high schools, would change a great deal because in those institutions the obstacles to taking students' minds seriously are great indeed. For acceptance of these goals to occur, two vital groups must support them: the community and the professional educators. Too often these groups have either been at odds about the schools' fundamental purposes or, more frequently, been in a complicit agreement that the schools can serve as holding pens to keep children out of the job market and, if possible, off the streets and out of trouble. The community and the educators have agreed not to expect the schools to undertake any rigorous education of the young. That complicit agreement needs to be renegotiated, and the new terms should be made explicit and public.

Were the schools to accept their responsibility for the nurturing of wit and character, the curriculum would change, probably dramatically. Not only the curriculum but also the pedagogy would be renovated. In this arena, the expertise of professional educators is essential, and few subjects have been in greater disrepute of late than either curriculum or pedagogy. The research in learning theory is substantial, and the moment is now right for the transition to be made from scholarship to practice. It is possible that here the new work with technology may be helpful.

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Traditional instruction in schools has been heavily didactic. When we have moved to "exploration" and less didactic modes, we have too often slipped off the track into a miasma of group discussion, project method, and other ostensible stimulants to creativity. Yet we have known that active learning is preferable to passive learning. We have also known that much adult learning involves not simply rote memorization of texts but cooperative solutions of varied problems. These recognitions have been extraordinarily difficult to translate into effective school pedagogy, but the potentiality that microcomputers offer for new curriculum and for group and individualized learning is immense. That potential has yet to be realized, but it exists.

When we consider the schools' responsibility for character formation, we need to be more imaginative than we traditionally have been about how that can be achieved. Certainly, the simplistic, didactic model has serious limitations. In this case, learning by example is immensely preferable to learning by rote. Study of texts certainly has a role in molding character. Yet a school that delegates to the formal curriculum the obligation to provide cautionary tales about moral development does not respect strength of mind, independence, individuality, and moral quality; furthermore, if the school does not preserve these qualities in its daily routine in all the ways—many of them difficult—that these qualities manifest themselves in school, it will not have fulfilled its obligation to nurture and to enhance character.

Recently Peter Greer, the superintendent of schools in Portland, Maine, has written eloquently about our current educational dilemmas: "Education is an enterprise of the intellect and the spirit. But we have forgotten our mission and are acting like monks in a monastery who are fighting over who is responsible for filling the holy water font."[24] We monks need to be sure that our order includes not only the cloistered educator but also those active in the community. The cooperation of both groups is imperative if we are to be successful in this enterprise of the intellect and the spirit.

When we consider suitable goals for our schools and appropriate means of implementing them, we need also to recognize six cautionary admonitions from our past educational experience. First, even if a statement of educational purpose attracts interest and support, its acceptance in the schools as a guide for educational practice will take

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a long time. Clearly such new ideas will be accepted in some schools sooner than in others, but the overall pattern of educational practice in America is resistant to change, as Larry Cuban has recently documented in his article in the *Harvard Educational Review*.[25] Such reluctance to accept change is probably, in the last analysis, a good thing, because it has prevented us as a nation from adopting some foolish novelties. We have before us the specter of the People's Republic of China with its radical curriculum revisions shifting with the political winds of the Cultural Revolution and reaction to it.

Paul Mort, a professor of education at Teachers College during the progressive heyday, once observed that educational ideas typically take fifty years to gain acceptance in schools. Probably Mort was not far wrong, for the evidence of the common-school movement, vocational education, and the peculiar progressivism discussed earlier suggests that time period is about right. Recognition of such a lag means that the goals and priorities for the schools require a timeless quality, one not specifically limited to the realities of the period in which the reform is proposed. Such timelessness is difficult to achieve, particularly with the specificity we have sought for educational reform. Aristotle's moral and intellectual virtue has the timelessness but not the specificity.

Second, any statement of an educational desideratum must not depend for its success upon its full and total implementation. The nature of practice is that full achievement of the ideal is rarely, if ever, achieved. Therefore, a worthy goal can not be one that depends for its worth on its full implementation. Rather, it must also be worthy if, as is most likely, it is only partially achieved. That was one fundamental lesson to be learned from progressive education. At its best, which rarely occurred, it was superb; in its partial acceptance, which was much more widespread, it was woefully deficient. Conversely, the classical, traditional curriculum, while offering less opportunity for individuality and creativity for students when taught only in a mediocre manner, nonetheless leaves a child with a residue of knowledge that is beneficial.

Third, as we consider educational goals and purposes we need to be sensitive to the balance between educational aspirations that will primarily benefit the youngster and those that will principally benefit the society. Obviously, in many instances both will benefit, but both must be considered separately. For example, the ardent nationalism

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of Benjamin Rush expressed itself in urging, "Let our pupil be taught that he does not belong to himself, but that he is public property" and "I consider it possible to convert men into republican machines."[26] That is clearly as excessively societal as the "do-your-own-thing" narcissism of the last decade.

Fourth, all who set goals for the schools need to recognize schools for the limited, though important, institutions that they are. Schools are not fundamental means of reorganizing the society, redistributing income, or even providing the love and care that each child requires. Their function is limited. They ought to be able to instruct children, but the efforts of the school cannot supplant those of a hostile community or family environment. Fortunately, most families and communities are not in violent conflict with the schools, but on those occasions when they are—such as a community's strong commitment to school athletics rather than academic learning—the school will have a difficult time insisting on its priorities against those of the community. That is one reason why it is extremely important for there to be community agreement about the fundamental purposes of schooling, a sentiment that is now rare. Education is a far larger matter than schooling, and those who are professionally responsible for the latter, unlike the broader community that is generally responsible for the former, need clarity and support for the narrower goals of schooling.

Fifth, we now know much more than we previously did about education, and how children learn, and how teachers can be effective in aiding learning. The gains from such research in education, psychology, cognitive science, and the neurosciences are still largely in the monographs, texts, and minds of the researchers. They are not in the practice of the educators, particularly of the school people. They need to be, for educational expertise that is now available can be of monumental help as new and appropriate demands are made upon school people to assure children's learning. Such transmission of research into practice is difficult and time consuming, but it can and must be done. The wheat of educational research has traditionally suffered from excessive chaff, but kernels are now more numerous and can be utilized.

Sixth, new goals and purposes for education must involve educators. If we have learned one thing from the implementation research of the last two decades, it is that top-down reforms undertaken

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without the participation of those who must carry them out are doomed to failure. Therefore, revisions of educational purpose that exclude the wisdom of professional educators are likely to meet the same fate as much of the educational protest literature of the 1950s: it will be ignored by the school people. Educators today are in a very different frame of mind than they were in the fifties, and they are, I believe, much more willing and able to participate constructively in discussions about desirable and feasible goals for schools.

We Americans, who are appropriately vociferous in our critiques of education generally and the schools particularly, need to come to fundamental agreement about what we want our schools to do. In reaching that agreement, one group of Americans has a particular responsibility, though not an exclusive one, to participate in that discussion. They are professional educators: teachers, principals, superintendents, professors, college and university administrators. They all need to participate actively in that discussion, bringing the expertise they uniquely have to both the vision of education and the means of implementing that vision.

We must reject the tired vestiges of progressive education that still predominate in much of the educational practice of the schools, particularly the high schools, and we must embrace a new goal for our schools. That goal must be one that helps individuals to become more than they thought they could be, benefits society, and can be accomplished by the schools. We Americans, including the professional educators among us, must accept and move to achieve a clear goal for the schools. Such a goal is nurturing and enhancing the wit and character of the young.

ENDNOTES

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Learning and Citizenship: Aspirations for American Education

AT ONE LEVEL, CITIZENSHIP IS A POSSESSION: whether one is born in a country or is naturalized, certain values, rights, and responsibilities are derived from it. On another level, citizenship involves an ongoing participation in the affairs of one's immediate locale and in the larger world. Whereas the possession of citizenship is a fixed state, its exercise is a developmental process, requiring the ability to be reflective, to understand public issues, to make decisions and act both in one's own best interests and in the interests of the common good, to confront the uncertain and the unfamiliar with tolerance, and to be honest and patriotic.

This second level of citizenship generated the more optimistic features of Tocqueville's view of American democracy. It also underlay the extraordinary expansion of public schooling in the United States.[1] Americans assumed that the abilities and qualities essential to citizenship could be learned, and in a democratic society, *should* be by all who would be citizens. This belief in the link between citizenship and learning impelled Thomas Jefferson's "crusade against ignorance." It was fundamental to the agitation in the nineteenth century to open schools to all in order to extend knowledge as widely as possible. In a classic expression, the Working Men's Committee of Philadelphia argued in 1830 that "the original element of despotism is a monopoly of talent, which consigns the multitude to comparative ignorance, and secures the balance of knowledge on the side of the rich and the rulers." Education would break this mo-

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nopoly, and through equal access to knowledge would be the "only security for equal liberty." Since there could be "no real liberty without a wide diffusion of real intelligence," all members of society had to be instructed alike in the nature and character of their equal rights and duties, both as human beings and as citizens.[2]

Not all nineteenth-century Americans believed that equality of access meant the enhancement of learning. Many doubted the learning capacities of poor people, nonwhites, immigrants, and women. But the vision of those who fought for equality of access and treatment was a vision that articulated a close tie between learning and the capacity to fulfill the rights, the duties, and the opportunities of citizenship. As the Working Men's Committee implied, a citizenship based on limited knowledge was second-class citizenship.

Nineteenth-century common-school advocates fought for and achieved tremendous victories in enhancing educational opportunity. They believed that equality in schooling enhanced everyone's moral sensibilities and political responsibilities. Public education was for citizenship. Americans often engaged in controversy over who could be a citizen and over how citizens should behave, and were divided over whether some citizens should make more decisions than others; but they were acutely aware that all citizens in a democratic society could participate in governance, and that full participation depended upon moral judgments, understanding, knowledge, and commitment to the political process. Even as the particular ingredients of an education for citizenship changed over time as greater levels of literacy became necessary, Americans understood that mass education and egalitarian citizenship were inextricably linked.

In the first decades of the twentieth century, John Dewey made perhaps the most forceful case for the intimate connection between democracy and learning. A society that was free, that was "full of channels for the distribution of a change occurring anywhere, must see to it that its members are educated to personal initiative and adaptability," Dewey argued in 1916; "otherwise, they will be overwhelmed by the changes in which they are caught and whose significance or connections they do not perceive."[3] That was the gravest risk to democracy. Without access to skills and knowledge, citizens would become overwhelmed and withdraw from the responsibilities of citizenship. And with that withdrawal, democracy would be lost.

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Today these hopes for public education remain unfulfilled. While the aspiration to an educational system open to all citizens has been one of the most remarkable achievements of American life, with proportionally more youth going to school for longer periods of time than in any other country, the numbers who lack basic literacy are staggering. An estimated 25 million people lack the skills deemed necessary to function and participate in society. One in five Americans cannot read and write at a level needed to handle many of the demands of daily living. Much of this functionally illiterate group is made up of the poor and the nonwhite; 40 percent of those with annual incomes below $5,000, compared with 8 percent of those with incomes above $15,000, and 56 percent of Hispanics and 44 percent of blacks, are estimated to be functionally illiterate.[4]

Given this deplorable state of affairs, the present national focus on increasing literacy rates is understandable and appropriate. A democracy cannot flourish if a significant number of its citizens lack the skills and knowledge necessary to make considered judgments about public affairs. That all too many of our youth and adults are unable to fill out forms and read labels, to write and speak complete sentences, and to do simple arithmetic is the shame not simply of our educational system, but of our society as a whole. It is of fundamental importance that we make a commitment to overcoming the inadequacy of basic skills, as difficult as that task may be. Without such a commitment, America cannot fulfill its aspiration to be a democratic society in which all can participate as citizens. A fundamental obligation of schooling in a democracy is to educate youth in the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that are crucial to an informed and involved citizenry.

But if we confine ourselves to a notion of literacy that encompasses only basic skills, we are in effect confining ourselves to nothing more than minimalist aspirations. Such a limited conception makes it difficult to conceive of a literate citizenry, and hence, of excellence as an educational aim. We need not and should not settle for so little. Rather, we should begin with a definition of literacy that stresses the possession of analytic skills and the capacity to act using these skills, one that is flexible enough to make the particular skills needed at any time capable of adaptation to changing historical, social, and technological circumstances. Patricia Albjerg Graham offers one such definition, calling literacy the ability "to read, to communicate, to

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compute, to make judgments, and to take actions resulting from them."[5] But even this goal is not enough. The practice of citizenship requires still more. Citizens need to know how to go about learning; they need to be empowered in a multitude of ways of making meaning and of understanding. Literacy, then, becomes the basis of learning, and can be enlarging and facilitative rather than deterministic and limiting. Such a view of literacy and learning contains a prospect of human *potential* rather than human limitations. It holds out standards of excellence too often absent from debates about "basic skills."

It may seem quixotic to advocate an expanded and fluid definition of learning at a time when the American public has almost despaired of achieving adequate and universal literacy in the form of reading, writing, and computing. It has an air of unreality, given the dismal conditions of life and learning in too many schools, where absenteeism has become a chronic problem, where teachers have lost traditional authority, and where incessant budget crises threaten to overwhelm all. But an expansive notion of learning is quixotic only if we continue to think of basic skills as somehow divorced from learning as a process of engagement, only if we hold to a view that first one learns basic skills and then one uses those skills productively and imaginatively.

The divorce of basic skills from creative and imaginative thinking tends to treat schools as minimalist institutions, places where everyone learns a little and only a few learn a lot. This is contrary to democratic citizenship, since the divorce even limits the likelihood of achieving the basic skills. The tendency to divide the process of learning into hierarchical steps and then treating the learning of basic skills as something that precedes using those skills in creative and active ways undermines not only student motivation to learn the skills, but the creativity of teachers and their willingness to teach them as well. Furthermore, it defers the gratification that ought to come with learning, since the skills are rarely rewarding in and of themselves. For most students, rewards and further motivation come from how they use the skills in the pursuit of knowledge and the development of intellectual, social, and emotional capacities. Treating basic skills as a separate task of schooling subordinates and thus diminishes the range of human knowledge. Aesthetics, emotions, and symbolic expression become something we do or have, if at all, after

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we learn to read, write, and compute—a dreary vision that is fundamentally at odds with everything we know about learning as involving the person in dynamic interaction with the world. Mark Twain said that the person who does not read good books has little advantage over the person who cannot read them. A notion of literacy that fixes on, but is not equally committed to inspiring in all students the desire and capacity to learn expansively falls considerably short of what we consider schooling to be.

Schools, then, ought to be devoted to having students acquire what John Passmore calls "open capacities," capacities that lead beyond themselves and that open the way to new areas of learning—or in Jerome Bruner's terms, knowing how to go beyond the information given.[6] That means cultivating attitudes toward learning so that students will *want* to read intelligently, or to solve practical and abstract scientific and mathematical problems in whatever shape or form they find them, or to seek to participate in and understand music and art as integral to their lives.

In his description of how he became a master riverboat pilot in *Life on the Mississippi*, Mark Twain gave us a vision of learning that incorporates basic skills and the capacity and commitment to go beyond them. Twain's experience in getting to know the river, Joseph Featherstone tells us, is a classic American expression of a metaphor for learning.[7] Twain learns how to navigate the river at a young age, learning every shoal, snag, and sandbar. These are the basic skills. But no sooner has he memorized their locations and peculiarities than he has to modify or forget them, and learn other spots, for the river never stops changing its course. Twain must simultaneously remember the reality of what exists in the river and imagine how different forces and conditions are likely to change it. He can never know the river completely or certainly; knowledge about the river is always provisional. The point can be generalized: as in Twain's education as a riverboat pilot, action and understanding depend on mastered skills and memory. Yet knowledge is fluid, not set in stone; understanding is an ongoing process, never ceasing, never absolute. In the process of learning, we, like Twain, continually remake our education, ourselves, and our ways of coping with and understanding the world.

Twain's metaphor offers us a far more complicated but richer vision of learning than the traditional approach of most classrooms, wherein learning is perceived as the transfer of material from teacher

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to students, and knowledge is sharply defined, highly structured, even considered permanent. In such classrooms, once one has this knowledge, it does not go away; it is quite specific and easily measured. In short, one can either read, write, and compute, or one cannot.

In Twain's vision, learning involves these basic skills and competencies, but it also *evolves* from them. As Dewey taught us, experience is inextricably involved in any education. What one learns beyond the basic skills is hard to measure; it is constantly shifting and being transformed. No single test can measure all its various dimensions. What one knows must be manifested time and again, adjusted to new situations, criticized, evaluated, expanded upon. That vision of learning, difficult to implement as it is, should be central to schooling. Instead, it is uncommon. The metaphor of knowing the river rarely intrudes into the curricular guides, the lists of courses, the tests, or the teaching practices of most schools. It is not one that the public or educators are comfortable with. Instead, questions about learning are packaged into curricular and pedagogical compartments: What courses should be required? At what grade level should biology be introduced? How much homework should students do? Should teachers lecture or discuss? What kinds of tests should be used? These questions of course are necessary, since it is difficult to talk about schools without referring to what is being taught and how the material is being presented. To survive in the classroom, teachers must have answers to these questions, and the public has a right to know what they are. But to focus exclusively on such questions is limiting, because it prevents us from asking prior and harder questions about what we think knowledge is and what the process of learning involves, and thus keeps us from striving for significantly better schools and a significantly more empowering conception of learning.

We rarely ask these other questions, in part because many educators and the public at large see them as arcane, abstract, and irrelevant. Consequently, almost all of our educational decisions are short-term, open to the fashionable swings of educational fads. We move—barely noticing the cyclical nature of the process—from emphasizing the "new" curricula for the best students in the 1950s, to compensatory education in the 1960s, to basic skills in the 1970s, and undoubtedly to the "new" new curricula in the 1980s. The swings are disheartening, not because change is bad, but because the

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changes so often reflect a conception of education that is narrow and limiting, one that does not incorporate an expansive view of what learning is and what it can aspire to be.

Taking this larger view would lead schools to consider much more seriously than ever before the development of imaginative expression and critical thinking as educational aims. Citizenship, like learning, involves seeing other points of view; understanding, even celebrating, differences; being able to see through stereotypes; being able to transcend custom where it is appropriate, or support it and its meanings when that is appropriate. Being an active citizen requires having a flexible intelligence and a mind free, as Matthew Arnold said, of stock notions and habits. The key to flexible intelligence is imaginative and critical thinking.

Imaginative expression is frequently associated with playing rather than with working, with imprecision and randomness rather than with substance and specificity. Given the stern necessity of justifying education in terms of its vocational ends and payoffs, little utility is seen in developing imaginative expression. Imaginative expression, in turn, has been ill served by some of its proponents, who often lump it under a generalized "creativity" in which children are allowed to "express themselves" freely in a manner devoid of knowledge, technique, discipline, or purpose.

Yet, imaginative expression should inform almost all human activity. It should not be confined, as its detractors—and, all too frequently, its supporters—claim, to art or other expressive forms of communication. Nor is it something that is accomplished without knowledge, skills, or memory. Imagination infuses the best science as well as the best literature. "Imaginative guesswork," biologist P.B. Medawar tells us, "is the generative act in science."[8] But imagination does not float free of knowledge; it does not represent "how I feel" or "how I express myself," but rather the opposite of "behaving in a routine way." It means going beyond everyday observations, everyday experiences, and everyday inferences. Imagination makes it possible to see the world differently, to see possibilities, and to "promote a feeling for alternatives."[9]

In cultivating imaginative behavior, teachers would not simply be drawing out an inherent capacity in students that needs only to be released. The cultivation of imaginative behavior requires careful, thoughtful, and disciplined guidance—teaching in the best sense of

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the word. Such teaching is not to be confused with just letting the student's imagination run free, unshackled by the constraints of standards, institutions, or knowledge. We do not "beat the imagination" out of students, although we often so trivialize learning and bore them that their imaginative thinking usually involves how to get out of school and its requirements, or is limited to cafeteria escapades or antisocial activities. Like learning itself, imaginative behavior has many dimensions and takes a variety of forms. A person particularly adept at human movement may engage in sports or dance with imaginative movements and skills. Another may find verbal skills the basis of imaginative behavior. People may be imaginative in one way, unimaginative in another. The key—and it is central to our view of learning and citizenship—is to stimulate, guide, and expand the dimensions of imaginative understanding and expression for all students.

How to do this is much of what teaching is—or ought to be—about. It is a difficult task, one that can only begin when students are introduced to what Passmore calls "possible worlds," when a teacher can break down the students' convictions that the world must be seen in one particular manner, and only one. Urging different perspectives on students opens up the possibility that they can value their own experiences and insights, and apply them to what they are learning. It allows them to get outside their own world and to be exposed to new and varied ways of thinking about and representing the world; it gives them the opportunity to test their thinking against other perspectives and to value the experience and insights of others. To motivate imaginative thinking and expression thus involves integrating the security of what students already know with the challenge and the anxiety of what they do not. The tension is not easy to maintain, but without it, imaginative thinking and behavior is all but impossible.

Like imagination, thinking critically means to seek connections and meanings beyond the routine and commonplace; it does not mean being "opposed" to everything, as it is commonly misperceived to be. People who think critically draw on the basic skills, a body of knowledge and a set of habits and attitudes, to probe, to analyze, to solve a troublesome issue. They place special emphasis on problems that have no clear answers or that are matters of controversy. A teacher develops the students' ability to think critically by challenging

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them to think within a discipline of knowledge, by encouraging them to evaluate the information they have learned, and by asking them to observe the limits of what they understand. Critical thinking, like imaginative thinking, does not occur in a vacuum. Mastery of the basic skills and of knowledge and information is essential; students need something substantial to think and write about. But in critical thinking we use our skills, knowledge, and information to get beyond them. Critical thinking involves an understanding of the nature of the skills, knowledge, and information, and of the unavoidable biases inherent in them. It means recognizing the limits to certainty or completeness of knowledge; the limits, for example, imposed on scientific knowledge by the problem raised, the data sought and used, or by the method of interpreting the data. Or it means understanding "interpretation" in history, literature, or other subjects as an activity involving critical thinking and imagination.

Teachers who set out to teach their students to think critically will find their task difficult. There are no ready-made teaching methods. They will encounter resistance—from students, from principals, from parents. They will have to compete with the pressure of all the other activities of school life. But, as Passmore notes, a teacher who gives up teaching students how to think critically, or does not even begin to try, and "salves his conscience by training them in skills, . . . should at least be clear about what he is doing, and even more important, what he is *not* doing."[10]

Developing the capacity for critical thinking is important for deciding and choosing what is baseless fabric and for separating the trivial from the serious, the meaningful from the insubstantial. Throughout their lives, students will be surrounded by enticements and beset by fads, trivialities, and cultists of every stripe, all promising an elixir for, or salvation from, every irritant or tribulation. Technological complexity, the interrelation and confusion of political, scientific, social, and economic problems, the fluctuation and divergence of values between various groups, and a host of other uncertainties strain our capacities to know and fulfill obligations, to decide and act in our own and the public good. To act in an informed, responsible, and compassionate way requires the ability to think clearly and critically about issues, to think through the implications of actions, to persuade others. Without these abilities, the motions of citizenship can easily be reduced to empty gestures or rhetorical flourishes. The

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capacity for critical thinking offers no certainties, no promise of the good, no right decisions—but it does permit free choices informed by intelligence, choices that affirm human will, individual dignity, and citizenship.

Imaginative expression and critical thinking are central to a vision of schools as places where we learn to think and learn to learn. Both are necessary if schools are to be places that enhance a citizenship based on taking responsibility for one's thinking and actions. Without deliberate attention to the process of learning how to think, the ideal of learning as a process of growth cannot be realized. In that failure, the aim of active and thoughtful citizenship will be lost.

Redirecting schools to seek those ends requires paying greater attention to the organization of environments for learning. It means attracting and educating people who can be responsible, sympathetic, and demanding teachers, who are themselves committed to self-initiated and self-directed learning. It means making greater efforts to establish outstanding curricula, organized sequences of knowledge that challenge students to learn. The commitment requires cutting through the custodial function of schooling that puts students in a temporary holding pattern on the way to adulthood and makes them assume a relatively passive role: always in preparation for action but rarely acting. It requires that students gradually take more responsibility for their own capacities and goals for learning. And it means recognizing that within schools, learning is an interaction between teacher and students in a social setting. Because the curriculum itself is a mixture of facts and values, the beliefs and feelings of teachers and students matter a great deal. What teachers actually teach and what students actually learn is shaped by their knowledge, their habits of thought, their language, their feelings, and by the culture and power structures within the schools and beyond its walls. The perceptions of both teachers and students shape the realities of learning as much as textbooks, lesson plans, or examinations. In effect, teacher, students, and the various forms of knowledge are, as Michael Oakeshott has observed, "voices in a conversation, a conversation to which they each contribute in a distinctive way."[11]

This notion of a conversation fuses our ideas of learning and citizenship. The conversation is what learning is about and how we go about learning. It is important to citizenship because it leads to individual growth and social empowerment through the directed

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growth of attitudes, skills, and knowledge. The conversation involves critical, imaginative, and reflective thinking; it involves action and testing of knowledge and skills with others and in the world. It both enriches and empowers individuals and groups. It leads students and teachers into possible worlds, to alternative views, and into a multiplicity of ways of understanding and making meaning.

We can illustrate what this conversation might look like by thinking about the relationships between aesthetics, emotions, and experience, and by challenging traditional conceptions of scientific literacy. Educators are uncomfortable with diverse forms of representing meaning, particularly if the meaning is not accessible through reading, writing, or calculating. In schools, most approaches to aesthetics take the form of "art" and "music" classes, which often have to be justified on the grounds that they contribute to the basics, an argument few people—rightly—believe. Learning in the arts should be valued because of the importance of aesthetic forms of representing and knowing the world.[12] Schools have some responsibility to enlarge the students' sense of aesthetics, not by telling them what is beautiful, but by engaging them in creating and thinking about beauty, by helping them to recognize that emotions and the senses play important roles in thinking, and by illustrating that thinking aesthetically is as demanding and important as thinking scientifically, quantitatively, or historically. The tendency in schools and elsewhere to segregate aesthetics and cognition, emotion and knowledge, fails to enrich our understanding of how different modes of learning interact.

These limited views of the imperatives of learning, and of our capacities for useful and vital learning, dominate school curricula and teaching. Fluidity of learning in different modes is rejected for spurious certainties about facts and skills; atomized subjects replace holistic learning. The view that thinking in the arts is purely subjective—and hence less important—ignores the cognitive dimensions of thinking aesthetically and devalues the multiplicity of intelligences.[13]

Even scientists have deprecated a more holistic approach to learning, wrongly supposing that the so-called experimental method is somehow opposed to it. But the notion that scientific thinking is pure and rational, detached from human passions and weaknesses, is supported by an untenable view of "objectivity" that seeks at all costs, in Michael Polanyi's words, to eliminate from science "pas-

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sionate, personal, human appraisals of theories."[14] Few subjects are as ready-made as science to stimulate learning, particularly imaginative and critical thinking; few subjects are so important in the everyday practical sphere of our lives or in our larger understanding of the world. From the threat of nuclear annihilation to food additives to miracle medical practices, we are immersed in a flood of science and its technological extensions. Without a basic scientific literacy, ordinary citizens will be totally disenfranchised from the mode of thinking and understanding that is characteristic of our times.

Scientific literacy means knowing some scientific constructs, understanding and being able to practice the processes and norms of science, and being aware of the impact of science and technology on society. No one can know all science; it is possible, however, to know some of the major scientific ideas. Understanding of the processes or norms of scientific work involves at the least knowing how theories are formed, tested, validated, and provisionally accepted; how to observe and infer; how to recognize that science is a process of successive approximation; and how to encourage more general attitudes (essential to science, but not necessarily confined to it) such as open-mindedness, intellectual integrity, and a willingness to test opinions and beliefs. To be aware of the impact of science and technology means to understand the interactions between science and society in the moral, ethical, and sociological dimensions. Further, it means recognizing that science is an intellectual and social construct deeply rooted in the ethos and historical development of any culture or civilization.[15] Imaginative and critical expressions of science come from this basic literacy. They do not spring from science as readily as Archimedes from his bathtub. The "eureka!" of science, or any other activity, comes only after an accumulation of skill, knowledge, discipline, and hard work.

Schools have a responsibility to make these understandings of science and aesthetics central to the educational conversation. The more that scientific knowledge and aesthetics are joined, the more each can add to the educative power of the conversation. Habits of thinking, perspectives, data, ways of classification and verification, and practical skills will differ among the various disciplines and ways of knowing and expressing meaning. While the scientist attempts to explain the general, verifiable, and repeatable processes of the natural

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order, the artist may struggle to tell us what it felt like to live in a certain time or place, or what it feels like to be someone else. But each is engaged, from different perspectives and with different results, in passionate appraisals of human meaning.

Integrating scientific and aesthetic understanding is one way that schools can help students (and teachers) think about learning. Consider the following example of artist Robert Irwin observing an adolescent working on an old car. In a commonplace activity, the youth engages in what can easily be considered scientific and aesthetic learning:

> Here was this '29 [Roadster], absolutely dismantled . . . and the kid was making decisions about the frame, whether or not he was going to cadplate certain bolts or was going to buff-grind them or was just going to leave them raw, as they were; and he was insulating and soundproofing the doors. All kinds of things that no one would ever know or see unless he was truly a sophisticate in the area. But . . . real aesthetic decisions, truly aesthetic decisions. Here was a fifteen-year-old kid who wouldn't know art from schmark, but you couldn't talk about a more truly aesthetic activity than what he was doing. How should it look? What was the relationship of its machinery to its social significance? . . . All these things were being weighed in terms of the significance of how the thing should look.[16]

Like Twain's metaphor of learning the river, the passionate participation in the experience of rebuilding a car is an engagement of mind with the world, involving the necessary interplay of symbols, emotions, intuition, language, and objectivity. It also involves the practical dimension of making something. It is an engagement that many teachers understand and that the best of them struggle hard to replicate. We see it outside of classrooms frequently, but only rarely within.

Learning involves recognizing the patterns among the fragments we see and experience. It involves using a variety of means for describing and engaging with the world. To do this, we need to learn ideas and to learn how to abandon and transform ideas when they no longer suffice. We need to risk developing our powers of mind to lead us to "deeper and more gripping and subtler ways of knowing the world and ourselves."[17]

There is little in the ways we traditionally organize the schools, train teachers, evaluate students, or create curriculum that impels us

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toward such a diverse and enriched conception of learning. Almost none of the recent reports and studies of schools suggest that such an approach would be widely applauded or successfully implemented;[18] indeed, many of the trends toward legislated mandates and simplified testing and evaluation procedures point in exactly the opposite direction. And as we have already observed, the deplorable levels of basic literacy skills and the extreme difficulty schools are already having in commanding educative power—the power to inspire youth to learn—make it hard even to gain an audience for an enlarged and more enriched view of learning.

Yet, before the current wave of interest in the schools goes out of fashion, we would hope that at least some redirection of the kinds of questions being asked about education will occur. In particular, we hope that discussions about learning, and therefore about schools, will begin with Wittgenstein's question: *what is it to understand?* What does it mean, for example, to understand a foreign language, a work of art, a scientific theory, a nation's history or politics? How do the various ways of understanding differ from one another and what do they have in common? How can we best learn what we should know?[19] The answers to such questions are not easily reached, nor are they fixed, but it is tragic that schools have so little investment in asking them. Pursuing the answers—tentatively, questioningly, eclectically—may lead us to recognize that it is not necessary for everyone to know or understand something in the same way, and to recognize that we need to measure learning in a variety of ways. It can open avenues to teaching and learning based on multiple intelligences and encourage the provision of experiences for all students so that, in Thomas Green's words, "*no one* will be good at nothing, and *everyone* will be excellent at something."[20]

The process of learning, when it is seriously undertaken, is never inconsequential, even if its purposes are obscure. It involves learning a subject, facts, and skills, but its greater potential is that learning involves making meaning. This meaning cannot be imposed; it takes different forms for different people. Students who learn engage in making meaning for themselves and others that leads to their full human satisfactions, discontents, and responsibilities. Learning is preeminently its own justification, and in the process of learning, we become more fully human. From this may flow all kinds of derivative values, but the ultimate value is an enlightened mind and the released

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powers of individuals—alone and together—and from those powers flow meaningful and fulfilling citizenship.

ENDNOTES

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[1]See Lawrence A. Cremin, *American Education: The National Experience, 1783-1876* (New York: Harper and Row, 1980).

[2]Quoted in David B. Tyack, *Turning Points in American Educational History* (Boston: Blaisdel, 1967), pp. 140-41.

[3]John Dewey, *Democracy and Education* (New York: Macmillan, 1916), pp. 101-2.

[4]"Ahead: A Nation of Illiterates," *US News and World Report,* May 17, 1982.

[5]Patricia Albjerg Graham, "Literacy, A Case for Secondary Schools," *Daedalus* 110 (Summer 1981): 119.

[6]John Passmore, *The Philosophy of Teaching* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980); Jerome Bruner, *On Knowing* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1962, 1979).

[7]Joseph Featherstone, "An American Education," *Commonwealth School Newsletter* (1982).

[8]P.B. Medawar, *Advice to a Young Scientist* (New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1979).

[9]Passmore, *The Philosophy of Teaching,* pp. 145-65. We draw heavily on these pages in Passmore for our discussion of imaginative behavior.

[10]Ibid., pp. 180-81.

[11]Quoted in Paul H. Hirst, "Liberal Education and the Nature of Knowledge," in *Philosophical Analysis and Education,* edited by Reginald D. Archembault (New York: Humanities Press, 1965).

[12]On this theme, see John Dewey, *Art as Experience* (New York: Capricorn Books, 1958; originally published in 1934); Elliot Eisner, *Cognition and Curriculum* (New York: Longman's, 1982); Nelson Goodman, *Languages of Art* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1975); *Coming to Our Senses,* a panel report, David Rockefeller, Jr., 1977.

[13]Howard Gardner, *Frames of Mind: A Theory of Multiple Intelligences* (New York: Basic Books, 1983).

[14]Michael Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), p. 15.

[15]For a collection of essays on scientific literacy, see *Daedalus* 112 (Spring 1983). See also National Science Board Commission on Pre-College Education, Mathematics, Science, and Technology, *Educating Americans for the 21st Century* (National Science Board, 1983).

[16]Lawrence Weschler, "Profile: Robert Irwin," *The New Yorker,* March 8, 1982, p. 80.

[17]Bruner, *On Knowing,* p. 118.

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[18]Theodore R. Sizer, in *Horace's Compromise: The Dilemmas of the American High School* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1984), points in some of these directions.
[19]See Passmore, *Philosophy of Teaching,* chapter 8.
[20]Thomas F. Green, "Weighing the Justice of Inequality," *Change* (July/August, 1980), pp. 26-32.

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Stephen R. Graubard

Zeal, Cunning, Candor, and Persistence—to What Educational Ends?

THIS HAS BEEN AN EXTRAORDINARY TIME in the history of American education. Rarely, if ever, has there been such an outpouring of reports, books, and articles inquiring into the condition of America's schools, offering so many remedies for the institutional ailments that are acknowledged to exist. While some are more alarmed than others and appear more zealous in insisting that the nation, because of its educational deficiencies is today "at risk," that there is a "rising tide of mediocrity" in the land,[1] it is significant that almost all accept the proposition that America's schools are in some sense "failing." Prestigious commissions, no less than individual authors, have come forward to argue that fundamental change is necessary.

While differences exist on specific recommendations—on whether to institute a longer school day, a longer school year, the advantages and disadvantages of systems of merit pay for teachers—all seem to agree that the schools have been too lenient in accepting what are now recognized to be "academic frills," that a more substantial curriculum needs to be devised, that the "cultivating" of good teachers ought to have the highest priority. Teachers, it is believed, are too poorly paid; many are thought to be overworked; only a few are sufficiently stimulated to improve themselves, to develop new skills in teaching. To recruit more able young men and women as teachers, to train them while in service, to retain only the best, and to do all this in such a way as redounds to the reputation of the teaching profession appears to be the universal plea.

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No one has yet come forward to suggest that in a modern technological society such a total reliance on a "mass profession"—such a complete dependence on a labor-intensive approach—is possibly outmoded. The scars left by an earlier disillusion with the benefits promised by advocates of "teaching machines" still show. The earlier romance with technology may have provided some temporary immunity from the facile expectation that machines would soon significantly substitute for teachers, that schools would be mechanized in wholly new ways, with profit to all. For better or worse, reformers today seem to agree that if teaching is to be done well, the one essential resource is *not* computers or the other technical apparatus that educational boards may be willing to purchase or receive, but a competent teacher. The problem is to discover the resource, to develop and nurture it, to pay for it at rates that are competitive, and to do all this in a way that wins public approval.

The recent debates on American education have on the whole been civil; the subject is clearly too serious to allow for much levity. Still, recent publications suggest that a certain acerbity has now entered into the discussion.[2] While last year's books and reports are still being praised for alerting the country to specific perils, some are beginning to ask whether the warnings of "decline and fall," dwelling on the "mediocrity" of America's schools, were not somewhat exaggerated. Are conditions in America's schools really as bad as they have been made out to be? Have major corrective measures, recently introduced, not already begun to remedy many of the school abuses that ardent investigators, employing a somewhat inflated rhetoric, did so much to draw attention to?

Paul E. Peterson, writing in *The Brookings Review* in the winter of 1983, shows himself partial to this view. In an essay laced with irony, Peterson questions the value of at least six of the major educational commission reports that had received significant publicity.[3] Arguing that the research methods used were defective, that the information on student achievement was substantially out-of-date, and that the commissions did not succeed in documenting the putative loss of public confidence in America's schools, Peterson asks whether the commissions would not have been on sounder ground "if they had limited themselves to the claim that schools were no longer improving as rapidly as in prior decades."[4] If any educational institution is in trouble, we are informed, it is the comprehensive high school. Why

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pretend, then, that the whole system is collapsing, that the nation itself is in danger? As for the specific recommendations of the commissions, Peterson calls them a "potluck supper," with "wholesome main courses for which no recipe is given; gourmet dishes of extravagant cost; and enticing desserts that, once tasted, turn out to be nothing but sugar and air." The "gourmet dishes," Peterson says:

> . . . include 10 to 20 percent increases in the length of the school year; 15 percent increases in the length of the school day, eleven months, instead of nine months, of pay for teachers (which would require a 22 percent increase in teacher salaries, apart from any cost-of-living or merit increases); reduction in the time spent by teachers on "non-educational" tasks (e.g., hall, lunch, and playground supervision); a 25 percent increase in teacher salaries over and above the rate of inflation; full-tuition scholarships for college students planning to become teachers; awards, grants, and/or special assignments for master teachers; sixty minutes of preparation time a day for every teacher; significant expansion of guidance programs; and higher salary schedules for science and mathematics teachers.[5]

If the country had no other major needs, if resources were limitless, such an array of benefits might be contemplated. Given the conditions that exist, however, Peterson says that the proposals are meaningless. They cannot be realized. Besides, there is no real need for them. Teacher salaries, it appears, ". . . (in 1982-83 dollars) have been boosted from an average of $8,139 in 1930 to an average of $21,259 in 1980." In the same period, student-teacher ratios have fallen from 25:2 to 16:6; per-pupil expenditures, in constant dollars "have increased by more than five and a half times." In comparing teacher salaries with those of "workers" in other "industries," Peterson finds that elementary- and secondary-school teachers earned 2.4 percent above the average of full-time employees in all industries in 1929-30; they earned 14.7 percent more in 1980-81.[6]

If the commissions have been unrealistic in their economic proposals, their greater offense, we are told, has been an almost calculated unwillingness to grapple with the real educational issues—the political and administrative questions that ought to have been preoccupying them. This, however, would have required the commissions to dismount from their high (and secure) ideological horses, to descend into the political arena where they would have been vulnerable. Why, Peterson asks, have they chosen to be silent on such controversial

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proposals as school vouchers, ignoring the idea totally? Why, indeed, is there no discussion of a myriad of other sensitive issues that touch on the administration of schools? Peterson has no doubt of the personal integrity of those who signed the commission reports; he cannot, however, conceal his surprise that they have managed to avoid all the difficult and controversial questions. Perhaps it is in the nature of commissions to evade what is contentious and divisive. Still, "luck" may work to their advantage; one day, the commissions may be thought to have been influential, to have contributed substantially to educational reform.[7] Should this happen, the accolade will be unmerited. For if Peterson is to be believed, student performance is already improving at the elementary and junior-high-school level; the improvement will soon show itself also in the high schools where SAT test scores may be expected to rise. The extreme public agitation that attended school desegregation is now largely a thing of the past; that is apparently a closed chapter in the nation's history. We are told that we can look forward to an era of educational peace. If, as Peterson argues, the country is entering a period of sustained economic recovery, and if the improvement continues, the schools are certain to benefit. The commissions, we are told, have been running behind the pack; their excited rhetoric may delude some into believing that their reports contributed to the school improvements that are today increasingly apparent, but such has not in fact been the case.[8]

There is much in Peterson's criticism that merits study. While it would be unfair to suggest that it embodies the characteristic argument of the eternal American Pollyanna, looking always for the silver lining, it is certainly significant that a score of American citizens, serving on independent commissions, finds serious school deficiencies one year, only to learn the very next that the crisis they advertised was never very real. When one considers the speed with which all this has happened, it is fair to ask whether the United States is not a very strong society, a very frivolous one, or a highly uncritical and naive one. Can a "serious" nation accept with such celerity the proclamation of a major educational crisis one year, a pronouncement proving its non-existence the very next? How was it possible for so many to have been so mistaken? Were the commissions (all of them) in fact taken in by their own rhetoric?

If the Peterson essay is intended to be a body blow to the work of the commissions, the criticisms leveled by Lawrence Cremin, recently

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president of Teachers College, Columbia University, are considerably more nuanced, more circumspect, but possibly more devastating. Cremin, while admiring the commission reports and many of the recently published books on schools and schooling for what they have done to revive interest in education and in the need for substantial school reform, cannot, however, desist from declaring them "simplistic."[9] He does so in a prestigious forum, a meeting of the American Philosophical Society. Why such a severe indictment? Does Cremin also believe that schools are already on the mend, that those who advocate school reform understand too little of the economics of the situation and are disinclined to speak out on the politics of education? His criticisms, in fact, are of a different kind; speaking of the recently published reports and books, he says:

> They have not given us a clue as to how the schools are to undertake and achieve these new commitments in the drastically altered academic environment in which they are operating. They have said little about the prodigious tasks of curriculum development, innovation in the art of teaching, and teacher training and retraining that will be required to enable every American high school student to try seriously to master trigonometry, or biology, or a foreign language. They have ignored the inescapable problem of values, both in general and in the teaching of the humanities and the social studies. And they have failed to attend in sufficient detail to the determined political effort that will surely be needed to gain the public assent and raise the money that will be required to accomplish these tasks.[10]

He goes on to say:

> More fundamentally, the several reports have appeared to contend that the schools alone can solve the problems of American education during the 1980s and 1990s. They have paid little heed to the dramatic shifts taking place in American families; they have said little about how telecommunications might assist in the tasks of education; and they have only hinted at the kinds of pedagogical alliances the schools might develop with museums, libraries, historical societies, and local businesses and industries if they are to do their job effectively. In short, the reports have concentrated so exclusively on the schools, that they have failed to see both the problems and the possibilities of the "other educators."[11]

Cremin, a historian, knowing the role that such institutions (including the family) have played in the past and understanding their potential educational roles today, insists that serious and imaginative

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reflection proceed on what these institutions might still be able to do. Who could find fault with so reasonable a suggestion? The question, however, is why so many who have written the reports and books of the last year have neither recognized nor alluded to the necessities underscored by Cremin. Why, in short, have they been so "simplistic"?

The question is asked not so much to defend what the others have written but to ask whether Cremin has indeed discerned conditions and possibilities, outlining a viable strategy, that for one reason or another eluded them. Cremin suggests that the American family has changed radically both in structure and composition, and that the children in school today arrive with less in common than was once the case. This is almost certainly true, but Cremin is not satisfied to leave the matter there; he goes on to say:

> American families are less stable than they used to be—with respect to education, one out of four parents under the age of twenty-five listed as the head of a household is living without a spouse, and one in five children under the age of eighteen is living in a single-parent household. American families are more varied than they used to be, resulting from the great migrations of the 1970s in which some five to seven million people came to the United States, mostly from the Caribbean, from Latin America, and from Southern and Southeast Asia. And American families are increasingly dual career families, that is, there has been a steady increase in the number of women engaged in full-time paid employment outside the home (in 1975, over half of all married women living with their husbands, with children between the ages of 6 and 17, were working or looking for work outside the homes, as were a third of all such women with children under 6).[12]

Granted the accuracy of the data, one may legitimately ask how one would go about demonstrating that American families are today "more varied" than they used to be. The fact of large new immigration, legal and illegal, is universally acknowledged. Is it also obvious that this immigration is significantly more "various" than the immigrations at the end of the nineteenth century or early in the twentieth century? In short, has the country not known for a very long time quite disparate foreign populations in many of its major cities? Does the difference now not derive from the fact that many of these new immigrant populations are making demands of a kind not at all common half a century ago? Why do we not hear more about what is being asked, by whom, to accomplish what? Why so much

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euphemism, the conventional references, for example, to "dual-career families"? How many of the families who live and work in New York today would qualify as such? Is their number substantially greater in Atlanta, Chicago, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, or Houston? Why do we go on prating about "two-career families"? Is this not a strange way to describe the employment patterns that now exist, that range from families with children living with a single parent, almost permanently unemployed, to children living with two parents, one or the other employed occasionally, to those who are indeed both employed, perhaps full time, though often in menial tasks, to the relatively small minority that can in any meaningful sense be said to be pursuing a "career"? Why the unwillingness to confront the realities of American urban and industrial life today? Why the reticence? Is Cremin not just as unwilling to confront an American reality as those whom he criticizes? Why, in short, the universal hesitation?[13]

To ask this question is to ask *the* fundamental question about American education today. What is most significant about the commission reports and the educational books that have emerged recently is not that the first are unnecessarily diplomatic, that they avoid politics, and belabor the obvious, as Peterson implies, but that the reports and the books avoid certain truths about American society that are deemed too dangerous to discuss. Individuals write for specific audiences; so do commissions. The latter, searching for approval from the president or the Congress, are scarcely more free in their recommendations than those who write books intended for other constituencies whom they hope to reach and influence. To be too candid in educational matters is to risk giving offense; it is hazardous to speak the truth too loudly. When some who write know that teachers will be their principal readers, when others will seek approval from politicians, both alert to the import of every policy recommendation, common prudence suggests that a "code" be used, not least in a democratic society where certain things are not generally said in the open, and where candor may be at a discount.

While it is perfectly legitimate, for example, to suggest today that large new immigrant populations are creating major problems for urban schools, that black students of impoverished and broken families are clearly "at risk," there is little disposition to investigate too closely ethnic and racial differences, to inquire why, for example,

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the Oriental student's experience in a specific city appears to be so markedly different from that of the Hispanic child, why neither, even when living within or near the so-called central-city ghetto, experiences American life as the black child in the same city knows it. When a black scholar seeks to distinguish between the "life chances" of a Caribbean black and a black born into a northern inner-city ghetto, concluding that the first may have certain advantages, there are cries of outrage.[14] For a white scholar to attempt such analysis would have provoked even greater resistance. Distinctions of this kind are not supposed to be made. Blacks are blacks are blacks. In theory, at least, the country is a single entity. Depending on one's ideological preferences, the black is thought to experience the same indignities, suffer the same injustices, enjoy the same opportunities, wherever he happens to find himself in the United States. This is almost certainly untrue. Yet, it is immensely difficult to prove the statement false. There is too much local pride and too much local fear to encourage or to permit such distinctions—racial, ethnic, and regional—to be made openly, or to be looked at closely.[15]

So, also, with any number of other aspects of social life in this country today. We have very precise statistics on the incidence of lung cancer; we claim to know how much that disease is related to cigarette smoking; actuarial tables provide data that individuals are of course at liberty to ignore, but the information is easily available. No comparable information exists on the societal or personal cost of bearing a child out of wedlock; we know surprisingly little about these children—apart from their numbers—or about their mothers, often teenage children themselves. Greater knowledge might provide little protection against teenage pregnancy, but it would help illuminate the problems of teaching and caring for such children in urban and suburban America today. Yet, it is hazardous to become too place-specific; offense would be given.[16]

The high school generally does what it can to conceal its drug problems; to gain a reputation for being a refuge of "druggies" is not calculated to enhance even the best school's reputation.[17] So, in the suburbs as in the central cities, discretion rules. What is to be gained by a high school, public or private, advertising the number of student drug offenses, let alone the number of illegitimate births among its students? It is better to look the other way, to claim that this is "privileged" information, that it ought not to be shared. So long as

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this is true, gross statistics on the incidence of drug abuse, alcoholism, illegitimacy and the like are provided; more specific knowledge about its incidence in individual schools is kept under lock and key. Can anyone doubt that the motives behind the concealment are honorable? What would we learn, some will say, except that the middle-class girl, through parental and other counseling, will most often opt for abortion, that the less-privileged girl does not always have the same option, or may not choose to perceive it in the same way? What possible use would we make of drug- or alcohol-abuse data, presuming that the schools were prepared to share it, or indeed, maintained adequate records to transmit it?

The examples, though insignificant in themselves, suggest how many excuses are made to legitimate the withholding of data, and why any dwelling on class and race differences will always be stoutly resisted. There is no reason to believe that this situation is going to change very soon. It is endemic to the American democracy, and will always complicate the task of social analysis.

In the popular imagination, the young are thought to be a "laid-back generation," prepared to discuss any issue, unconcerned with what common opinion makes of their personal idiosyncrasies. Again, nothing could be less true. Whatever tolerance may exist for unconventional behavior in certain restricted circles, this does not imply a general tolerance even among the young for any number of social transgressions that are still thought by many adults to be deviant or dangerous. A superficial acceptance of certain forms of social behavior has misled a few into believing that the prejudices of another day are for all practical purposes extinguished. Most adults know this to be untrue; children are generally no less well-informed.

It is the extraordinary susceptibility of individuals—their readiness to take offense, to be hurt by what may not have been intended as criticism—that makes so many reluctant to say anything that will seem critical, that departs from the conventional pieties. Everyone, for example, accepts the fact that parents—families in general—are vitally important in the education of children, today as in the past. Few, however, are prepared to look at American families objectively, to consider what family life has become in specific ethnic and racial enclaves, what forms prevail today in certain central cities. Suburban family life, where both parents are employed, is scarcely less cloaked

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in mystery. There is great fear of generalizing, lest, however inadvertently, offense be given.

The disinclination to categorize families, to give them social, cultural, religious, or educational stigmata, is thought by some to be a mark of tolerance; others see it as moral neutrality; still others, as evidence of cowardice. Everyone agrees that the family can play a major role in the life of the child; there is a marked reluctance, however, to delineate that role. Most often, the purpose seems to be to persuade Ma and Pa, Mum and Dad, to encourage the young, to insist that they attend school regularly, appreciate the importance of school, and help with their children's homework, where such an arcane practice still prevails. We know that parents have often not succeeded in persuading their children to attend school; had there not been such widespread failure in the nineteenth century, the truant officer would never have come into existence.[18] As for providing more substantial aid—intellectual and instructional help in the most rudimentary sense—the immigrant parent is not the only one or even the principal one to beg off; other responsibilities and preferences may keep even the most conscientious parents from presuming to offer themselves in this capacity. Still, the talk goes on of what parents should be willing to contribute; few admit that much of what is said is wildly sentimental,[19] coinciding almost not at all with a reality that may have much less to do with marital disorder or divorce statistics than with other characteristic tensions of adult life in today's suburbs, cities, and towns.

If parents are undifferentiated—caricatures when they are not "characters"—so, also, are students. Only very gross distinctions are recognized. With all the effort made to discover what is distinctive about the young today, to depict their lives sympathetically and accurately, mass-media representations and statistical generalizations provide the only evidence that enjoys much credibility. While it would be easy to suggest that it is the sheer complexity of youth culture that makes the young so bewildering, their tastes and needs so obscure and so different from those of adults, another possibility needs also to be entertained. Is it possible that we are making the young mysterious when many are, in fact, versions of ourselves? Are we giving television, drugs, alcohol, sex, violence, clothes, and music an undue significance for adolescents because we are failing to look more critically at the values common to millions of adults in

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contemporary American society? Until we begin to appreciate the fact that conformity in America, beyond its more superficial aspects, is not simply a peer phenomenon, that it often crosses both generational and racial lines, that even social class does not provide protection against its more insidious influence, we will go on imagining that "they"—the youth—and "we"—the adults—inhabit different universes. Regrettably, perhaps for both groups, this may not be the case at all. The same materialism, the same idealism, the same innocence, the same guilt, the same (though not identical) fears permeate and touch both young and old. The habit today is to avert our eyes from much of what is happening in American society; in the process, we refuse to see what is everywhere around us.[20]

Those who find fault with the commission reports, the books, pamphlets, articles, and tracts of the last year, all of which purport to describe school conditions and to outline reforms that need to be made, have some reason to be dissatisfied. If a general criticism may be made of all these works, it is that they have accepted too much of the conventional wisdom about schools, and have neglected to ask embarrassing questions about the recalcitrant political, social, and economic forces that remain so powerful in America today. In education, too many Americans, including those who are expert, shy away from sensitive subjects. There is little disposition to argue that false roads were taken, that major political and administrative mistakes were made, that many who are still active in education have a great deal to answer for. Because in the United States today class, race, religion, and region are peculiarly sensitive matters—as sex was for an earlier generation—there is little disposition to look closely at specific communities, at individual schools. Crude statistical compilations serve to obscure a more complex reality. Education invites rhetorical flights; personal reminiscences and selective autobiography are too often substituted for critical and close analysis.

If one searches for the spark that generated the current spate of writing about America's schools, it is clear that its origins had little to do with a genuine national "crisis." Still, the habit of finding an immediate "crisis" to justify bold action led both individuals and groups to fasten on the country's economic problems in a time of recession. These would be alleviated, it was suggested, through educational reform. Powerful political interests were engaged; the business community was involved; teachers were made to see that the

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cause of educational reform was their own. While no one deliberately set out to define the issue in such a way as to guarantee that each of these constituencies approved, there was a remarkable convergence of interest, at least in the beginning. Given America's growing productivity and trade problems, not least with Japan, it seemed reasonable to argue that Japan's economic resurgence, which clearly threatened America's economic well-being, could be explained at least in part by the quality of its work force. From that proposition, it was a simple step to the assertion that Japan's schools made substantially greater demands on their students than those commonly made in the United States, that they required more hours of study, more days of school attendance, and greater competence in the natural sciences, mathematics, and other "academic" subjects. If the United States was experiencing difficulties in competing economically with Japan, might the troubles not stem in part from the nation's educational deficiencies?[21]

A version of a once-run political scenario was revived; as the Soviet Union had been used in the Sputnik era to goad the federal government into action, with both state and local authorities being asked to commit more substantial funds for education—to "catch up with the Russians"—so now, a similar argument was advanced to give the country advantages in its economic race with Japan. There were significant differences, however. At a time of fiscal constraint, when the federal government's annual deficit was approaching two hundred billion dollars, it was clearly impolitic to make recommendations that would call for vast new federal expenditures. Suggestions were made for improving teachers' salaries, for giving greater attention to other of their legitimate complaints, but no very precise calculation was made of the costs that would be incurred. It was this evasion—this lack of public candor—that so offended critics like Peterson. Why, they asked, was there no acknowledging the fact that the size of the bill for the contemplated reforms would be substantial? Why pretend that it could be done "on the cheap," with profit to everyone?

The "Japan will get us" argument was made in a way calculated to win wide public approval. Parents were expected to be elated by the prospect of their children receiving substantially better instruction. Businessmen were made to feel that the responsibility for Japanese success (and, by implication at least, American failure) had absolutely

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nothing to do with them; others—nameless others—were clearly responsible. Teachers were told that they were "essential," that they deserved salary increases and other tangible benefits. The teacher was made to appear as the one essential component of effective reform. Until more able men and women chose teaching as a career, until teaching was more highly paid—salary increases serving as an index of social esteem—there could be no fundamental improvement in America's schools. Implicit in this was the idea that able women might once again become excited by the prospect of a teaching career, that men might join them in substantially greater number, and that all this depended on salaries and other conditions of work being significantly improved. These benefits had to be extended first to those who were already teaching; otherwise, the "draining off" of the best talent would continue. Who could possibly argue with such recommendations? The fundamental question, whether such reforms did not greatly oversimplify America's educational problems, deliberately skirting many of the real issues that ought to have been addressed, was rarely posed. Almost no one came forward to ask what had happened to teaching as a profession. Indeed, did it even make sense to go on referring to it as a profession?

Had the question been posed in that way—had it been expressed in such incendiary terms—all would have recognized it as deliberately provocative. Yet, a major-foundation executive, when asked to support a study of three contemporary professions—law, medicine, and teaching—found the idea laughable. Law and medicine, he explained rather grandly, deserved the dignity of being called professions; teaching was not a profession at all. What, then, was it? Gazing out from his windows high over the vast expanses of New York, he intoned: "Teachers resemble other city workers; they are like police, firemen," and then, with deliberate emphasis and a calculated pause, "—garbage collectors." Should remarks of this sort be dismissed as the jaundiced view of an individual disillusioned with city schools, influenced perhaps by mass-media accounts of school conditions, or ought it to be understood as a belated grievance against those teachers who, more than a decade ago, took to the streets, went out on strike, finding no other solution to their problems? Is the comment to be read more as a statement about one foundation executive, his prejudices and beliefs, possibly idiosyncratic, than about the objective conditions that exist in one of our country's major cities? Perhaps.

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Still, setting the rhetoric aside, is there any truth at all in this angry assertion? Law and medicine, like teaching, acquired their professional status in quite recent times. One has only to return to the record of the last century to see that neither law nor medicine enjoyed then anything like the status that both are able to claim today. Each, indeed, until the middle of the last century, was a somewhat suspect and, for some, dubious "calling"; only substantial reforms have made them what they are today. While it is of course possible to find fault today with one or both, no one seriously questions their status as professions.[22] This issue of professionalism is in no sense an academic one. If teachers are not sufficiently respected today—if their earlier efforts to achieve professional status have failed, or at least have not succeeded in the way once hoped for—what is to be done? How, in the late twentieth century, does one go about "re-professionalizing" a calling? Is this what is needed? Does one simply take a leaf out of the American medical experience, call for a new Abraham Flexner, argue for a wholesale reform of schools of education, insist that state certification standards for institutions and individuals be revised upwards, or does one recognize that while such methods may have served admirably in an earlier period to improve American medicine, they are unlikely to work in anything like the same way today to reform American education?[23]

Is it possible that wholly new methods for recruiting teachers need to be contemplated, that the traditional routes into schoolteaching need to be largely reconsidered? Ought men and women, just emerging from college (with their liberal arts degrees) to be recruited in much greater number? Ought new principles of "internship" in teaching to be developed? Would it be useful if, in the public sector as in the private, young people were encouraged to think of teaching as temporary employment only? Is this the way to build a profession? Or does it depend on the unique opportunities offered by teaching being correctly communicated, without the career lines being too precisely drawn? Is teaching an occupation particularly suited to the young, or is it also suited to those who are older who wish to turn (or return) to it in their fifties or sixties as a second or even a third career? Are there ways to test teaching competence—particularly in specific subjects but also in more general areas—that do not simply register the fact that one has attended a certified educational institution, having received a satisfactory grade for a specific number of courses?

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Would such new procedures satisfy state teacher-licensing authorities? How would the trade unions react? What morale problems would be created by such innovations in the schools themselves? Is it possible that higher salaries and improved working conditions—the standard industrial improvement procedures long favored by trade unions—are the only reasonable ones for an "industry" that now claims several million "workers" who have vested interests in their jobs, and who, by contract, have specific rights that cannot be set aside?[24]

How teaching is perceived—not only by teachers, but by the general public, a body more numerous and far more important than that represented by the parents of school-age children—matters profoundly. It matters also what authority teachers are permitted to exercise and why its exercise is thought proper and legitimate. Unless teachers possess specific competencies not common to others and unless those competencies are acknowledged and valued, it is impossible for them to claim professional status and to have that status recognized. None of this is intended to disparage the importance of salary increases, salary differentials, and other similar benefits; it is simply to suggest that professions, historically, have neither established themselves nor advanced their members' claims by insisting that they are underpaid, underprivileged, and that common decency dictates that they receive more. Professions have achieved authority through a demonstrated competence, through an ability to persuade clients who require specific services that these are not otherwise obtainable, at any price, and that they can be conveniently and safely secured only from those who have been judged competent by their professional peers. Professionals render counsel and provide service to those who need them, those who acknowledge the need and accept their competence. Until teachers know that there are no others—not parents, siblings, priests, or tutors—in a position to do what they do, licensed to do it, able to expend the time on it, aware of the dignity and necessity of the enterprise, they will alternate between being "custodians" of unruly adolescents or the "boon companions" of those students who are more appealing and more interesting.

This does not imply that in a revitalized teaching profession there will not be more and less accomplished practitioners, that some will not earn more than others because of intellectual ability, administrative skills, scarce competencies, and other such criteria. It does

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suggest, however, that a significantly heightened self-esteem, together with a more incisive understanding of the nature and the requirements of the profession, may just possibly lead many more teachers to concern themselves with improving their skills. In time, more will understand how much students rely on them, why there are no others to do what they do. Schools will still retain different reputations, as do modern hospitals and law firms; not all will be equally esteemed; not all will be equally sought after. An important variable, however, may be that a somewhat greater number will give significant attention to the quality of academic service offered. Schools will be judged somewhat more by the character of the teaching they provide, which is not to say that the quality of the more tangible school facilities will be ignored, or that existing social-class snobberies will be wholly extinguished.[25]

However severe one may be in deploring the incompetence of certain teachers in institutions that call themselves schools, there is today far too little investment in the human capital that is so critical a component of all American schools. While it is possible to mock the suburban high school, with its Olympic-size swimming pool, fully equipped gymnasium, extensive playing fields, and twenty-first-century cafeteria, all such capital expenditures are really inconsequential when placed beside those that need to be made in the ongoing training of the educators of children. The greatest barrier to the "re-professionalization" of teaching may be the absence of really powerful political, social, and economic constituencies in the country who know that what now exists is not nearly good enough, for white children or black children, for Hispanic or Oriental children, for those attending large comprehensive public high schools and others in more "privileged" enclaves, fee-paying schools that pride themselves, rightly or wrongly, on a purported ability to provide a "superior" educational service. This is not to say that there are no good schools in the country today. There are many, but they are in proportion far too few, and it is not immediately apparent that their number is growing. The same must be said of teachers. Many appear anxious and able to teach well; some are superbly competent. The number in each category, however, appears to be too small. This cannot be known for certain, but almost all the recent evidence on America's schools suggests that this is the condition that obtains. The

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question, obviously, is whether and how this can be changed. The recommended remedies may indeed be inadequate.

Professionalization implies that teachers will see themselves in new ways; hopefully, as colleagues, certainly not as employees working for a "boss." It is undeniable that American schools, both public and private, benefit greatly from enlightened and efficient leadership, that an accomplished principal or exceptionally able superintendent can significantly alter the mood and raise the tone of a school or even of a whole system.[26] Still, too great a reliance on a man (or woman) at the top—a too-faithful replication of the mythology and symbolism of our contemporary national political life—militates against the creation of great numbers of good schools, boasting substantial numbers of accomplished teachers. The educational texts that dwell on the centrality of the teacher in the schools are right to do so. Regrettably, too few explain how a mass profession can be created at this moment in the twentieth century, and why all this depends on the infusion of values not now predominant in American society and on the commitment of resources—intellectual as well as material—not now available.

A nation willing to tolerate a 40-percent unemployment rate among the youth of a particular race—able to do so at a time when the importance of work to personal self-esteem and social harmony is universally recognized—cannot be all good. It certainly cannot claim to have a highly developed social conscience. Indeed, the obscenity of the situation—the fact that it is permitted to continue—shows an almost cavalier attitude towards social deprivation. In another age, charity might have intervened to help remedy the situation. Today, such philanthropic assistance is neither welcome nor effective. "Doing good" is not what very many are disposed to recommend; it is generally assumed that some public authority will intervene to rectify the situation. Will this in fact happen? If black youth—together with certain other minority youth—are inadequately educated in today's America, will the situation change when the conscience of the nation is appealed to? That appeal has not worked to date. What reason is there to expect that it may soon begin to work?

Many who criticize the recent national reports on educational reform dwell on the inadequate attention given to dollar costs. Where, they ask, is the money for all such reform to come from? The more serious problem, certainly, is that the studies give so little

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attention to politics, and not only to the political agenda set by the president; that they ignore wholly questions of race, class, ethnicity, religion, and region that are absolutely central to the educational enterprise. Education is a profoundly political matter in the United States today. This implies much more than that an elected official, Mayor Koch of New York, will choose a Hispanic rather than a black to head the city's educational system, recognizing a greater potential political electoral advantage to himself in that choice. Nor does it suggest only that certain proposals and practices—educational vouchers, aid to denominational schools, book selection, censorship—are profoundly political, highly sensitive issues in specific communities. The more fundamental political question—and one rarely addressed—has to do with who is satisfied with the educational system as it presently exists and is able to negotiate within its peculiar confines, however great the deficiencies of the system may be. Who, in turn, is silent about its principal defects, will occasionally complain, but will do nothing more? Who is so outraged by the system's social injustices and intellectual shortcomings as to act politically?[28] How powerful are each of these groups? What may be anticipated of any of them in the near future?

Finding the answers to any of these questions is exceedingly difficult; attempting to predict what the political situation will be a decade from now, let alone in the year 2000, and how all this will affect the schools, is an even more daunting enterprise. In most conventional political accounts, it is assumed that American middle-class parents will be the most demanding in matters of schooling, that their agitation will generally, in time, produce reform. In fact, a quite different prospect may present itself today. While certain middle-class parents may indeed be disaffected or disenchanted with schools, and may worry about the quality of the public (or private) education now available for their sons and daughters, the greater number appears to have a sufficient choice (if only in selecting their place of residence or in opting for a private school) to be only occasionally agitated by reports of inferior school quality. Also, at a time when many colleges and universities, including a number reputed to be good or excellent, have ample space for those able to pay or borrow, the principal barriers to college admission for middle-class students appear to be economic. In any case, substantial numbers of middle-class parents cling to the idea that schools exist mostly to build character, to foster

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a spirit of competition, to create an appreciation of the values of teamwork. Sports and other types of extra-curricular activities are thought to be all-important. Such parents judge schools principally by the facilities they provide, expecting, of course, that the extra-curricular achievements of their children will be faithfully recorded for whatever use the colleges of the country may choose to make of such records.

The progress of adolescents towards the better colleges and universities of the country is substantially enhanced, most middle-class parents believe, if character is shown in non-academic activities. So long as this is believed—and so long as it is true—an insistence on a more substantial scientific literacy, on the command of one or more foreign languages, or on the development of other traditional academic skills will always remain secondary for a good number of middle-class schools, and while a few may be moved to offer advanced instruction for the exceptionally gifted, the greatest number will be satisfied to offer what the colleges ask for. Children, offered such modest fare, will grow physically and develop emotionally, hopefully avoiding some of the more dangerous snares of contemporary adolescent life in the United States today. They are not likely soon to resemble their Japanese contemporaries. Extending the school year (or the school day) will not do very much to change this. The culture of American middle-class parents cannot be wholly ignored; they understand the educational system only too well, being themselves the products of it.

What, then, of the millions of the others, of other social classes, whose children receive substantially less than this, who, from an early time, are acutely aware that neither college, employment, nor a "career" is at all a certainty for their progeny? The fact is that we know remarkably little about the sentiments of these parents. Some, defeated in this as in many other things, probably accept the situation, having no notion of how to change it. Others—in numbers unknown, in communities unstudied, in racial, national, and religious enclaves rarely investigated—resist. The forms of their resistance, however, their objectives and their success are only intermittently given any significant public attention. Indeed, information on this sort of political activity is in general so scanty that we do not always know what the agitation is about or what it is intended to accomplish.[29]

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In theory, political coalitions of disadvantaged and economically-deprived parents, aided and abetted by others who are more comfortable, with children of their own or without children, could make a substantial difference in achieving school reform. Some would like to believe that instances of this sort are common in certain local communities. Without suggesting the contrary, it is a fact that the new literature on America's schools is remarkably silent about all such political developments, neither extolling nor recommending the building of new political coalitions aimed at school improvement.

If parents—or voters more generally—have not been markedly successful recently in compelling major school reforms to be made, what have other groups accomplished? Have businesses, for example—the principal American corporations—recognized their opportunity in all of this? Have they, if only out of self-interest, used their undoubted influence to improve the nation's schools? Given that substantial numbers of young Americans are today emerging from school without an adequate education, this must certainly be contributing to the country's productivity problems. If it explains even partially why the United States is doing so badly in its competition with Japan, if it also contributes, as it does, to the high incidence of crime and delinquency in the country, elevating all manner of social costs including those expended on unemployment relief, it must be in the interest of corporations to insist on improved educational performance.[30]

In theory, business acknowledges its interest and does involve itself. Any major chamber of commerce and many federal agencies are in a position to document the substantial contributions that business has provided. In fact, however, even where businesses do make financial and other contributions to assist specific schools, even where whole cities and communities are helped, such aid is generally fairly marginal. What businesses prefer to do—expending tens of billions of dollars in the process—is to establish their own internal training and educational programs, to prepare their own employees for the specific work tasks they will be required to perform. While it would be a grave mistake to dismiss these corporate training programs as principally remedial—doing what the schools and universities of the country cannot or will not do—no one pretends that most are "educational" in a conventional sense; they are intended to prepare employees for specific jobs. Men and women who have

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become habituated in school to a certain routine, can be depended on to arrive at work fairly regularly and on time, are not likely to disgrace themselves or their company by doing what is ethically or socially unacceptable, are taken on and then trained at corporate expense. While some few corporations might wish to recruit their employees from more privileged social backgrounds, choosing from the more prestigious schools and universities of the country, most are satisfied to recruit men and women who appear to be stable, have a satisfactory record of school attendance, are interested in joining the firm, are ready to be trained for a specific job, and show themselves willing to work.

In no other country in the world is anything like America's corporate expenditure for the training of employees at all common. In this, as in so many other things, the corporations of the country, without explicit public acknowledgement, show their preference for middle-class youth, for those who have made it in the only competition comprehensible to top management, men and women who belong to the same social strata and accept the same values as those they employ and supervise. This is not intended to imply that America's corporations, including many of the most powerful, deliberately shun students who emerge from ghetto schools or who have dropped out entirely. The businesses of the country, aware that they cannot rely on educational institutions alone, compensate for what the schools and universities are not themselves doing. There is a limit, however, to what they feel they are in a position to do. If the country is not today scientifically literate—or literate in other ways—private corporations know that they cannot make it so. Making a profit—keeping up with the Japanese—is quite hard enough. Still, it is a fact that there has been little corporate intervention to change a public educational system that is so manifestly wasteful, that undoubtedly contributes substantially to the costs of doing business in this country.

What about other institutions? What can educational institutions—schools and universities specifically—do to improve the quality of teaching, to remedy certain of the conditions that now obtain in too many schools? Many would agree that they, like major corporations, can do substantially more. Yet, one makes a mistake if one exaggerates their short-term capacity to influence or to effect change. Schools are fairly complex organisms; turning any one of

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them around in the public sector, even with the help of an enlightened school superintendent, a committed and united school board, an able principal, and substantial contributions of local businesses, is a vast undertaking. Some efforts of this kind will succeed over time; their example may even prove infectious. One ought not, however, to exaggerate what has recently been achieved, or what the paying of attention to so-called exemplary schools can do for public education as a whole.[31] The changing of large bureaucratic public structures is not something that is quickly accomplished.

In the private-school sector the opportunities for fundamental change may be equally limited, though for other reasons. Private school boards are not in the habit of selecting headmasters whose purpose is to lead the school along novel and unconventional paths. Today, particularly, when private schools with good academic or other reputations are much sought after, and when there is continued flight from public education, the incentives for institutional self-analysis and significant change are few. Teachers, living on one-year contracts in most private schools, are not likely to emerge as ardent proponents of fundamental educational reform. An able headmaster with exceptional political instincts may be able to raise academic standards substantially if he shows tact and patience. He deceives himself, however, if he believes that his example will be widely imitated, first in the private sector, then in the public. No private school in the United States today has that kind of influence. Indeed, most live and prosper by enjoying local repute only, often for being somewhat more congenial or effective than their public counterparts.

Universities, both public and private, are probably in a position to do a good deal more for schools, but again, only with time. In the education of undergraduates, in recommending teaching as a profession to students, especially those who are recognized to be able, in substantially upgrading their own graduate schools of education, and in assuming some responsibility for the schools of their neighborhood and region, they can make significant contributions, particularly if such initiatives are maintained and occur in many places, not least in those that are acknowledged to be prestigious. Again, however, the influence can only be partial. Universities have scarcely begun to explore what they are capable of doing in the way of teacher-training on weekends or during summer holidays.

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The old canards about the insufficiencies of much that passes for educational research in this country are almost certainly unworthy of those who choose to repeat them. Still, it must be acknowledged that educational research today is not what it ought to be. Some say that the inadequacy derives largely from an insufficiency of funds, and that the resources now available, so different from those commonly awarded, for example, to medical schools, account for the quality of the research. This is a lame excuse. The need today is for research funds that stimulate candor. Such funds are exceedingly hard to obtain. So long as educational research avoids most sensitive issues—so long as it is dominated by a conventional "liberal" or "progressive" ideology—so long as it lacks the willingness to say that certain educational theories are fundamentally wrong, that certain influential empirical studies have taken America's schools (and school boards) down wrong paths, doing great damage in the process, there can never be much confidence in America's educational research enterprise. Tocqueville believed that only foreigners could be expected to tell the American people certain truths about themselves.[32] Is this the case in medicine today? Not obviously. Is it true of education? Yes!

If it were not, *Fifteen Thousand Hours,* a British book reporting on research in London schools,[33] would almost certainly never have gained the attention it has received in American educational circles. The book has a thesis; its principal virtue is not that it provides longitudinal analysis of a kind not attempted in the United States. On the contrary, its distinction derives mostly from the fact that it insists that a school has an "ethos," and, by implication, that the "ethos" is not so much the creation of a distinguished headmaster (a sort of local surrogate for a *deus ex machina,* some high and mighty political figure) but that it originates with teachers, department heads, and others in the school who are professionally trained. It would have been useful, for Americans, if the racial and social differences between the ten London schools had been more substantially delineated. The British, however, cannot be expected to do the Americans' work for them; it will have to be done here, by American scholars.[34]

It is time for Americans to look closely at their schools and to compare them. Why, for example, in New York, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, Chicago, and elsewhere, can public schools not be examined in the way that Rutter and his associates have done? If, as they demonstrate, their ten London schools show marked differences in

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student behavior and student achievement, if rates of absenteeism and delinquency are also significantly different, and if this can be linked to the ethos of the schools—then every effort to place the responsibility elsewhere, to imagine that other forces explain student failure, must to some degree be questioned. This is not to say that Rutter and his colleagues have asked all the questions that comparable American studies might pose. Other criteria for "good schools" might be developed here. However, the object must be to look objectively at institutional success and failure. Neither television, nor parents, nor textbooks ought to be made responsible, which is not to say that each may not be influential.

Rutter's work is a testimonial not only to what British schools can accomplish—contradicting the findings of certain prominent American educational researchers in the 1960s and 1970s[35]—but a testimonial also to a profession, the teaching profession. It does not celebrate individuals, named or unnamed; it celebrates a process, the process that in education gives meaning to the concept of being professional. Until professional attributes are recognized in teachers—until distinctions are accorded and merited—until the freedom and dignity that go with professional status are granted, teaching will continue to be a depressed (and depressing) occupation for many. It is for the teachers to teach; it is for them, in collaboration with colleagues, to determine why they do what they do, why young people need to master certain subjects, and how that mastery depends in part on creating a certain climate in the school, in the classroom. To know how to reach the young is difficult enough, but not nearly as difficult as knowing why one's own professional competence—common or rare—is a "gift" that deserves to be shared, based as it is on something other than the possession of individual genius or charisma. To argue in these terms is not to deny the importance of the labor market—it is not to say that salary and conditions of work do not matter in making an occupation attractive, in bringing able people to choose it—but it emphasizes the importance also of other more intangible incentives. These are not the arguments of the British authors; they are the lessons drawn by one American reader sated with a plethora of educational reform proposals that place the principal responsibility elsewhere, that make unlikely a "renewal" of the teaching profession.

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The case for reforming the schools so as to improve America's position in its economic competition with Japan has not been made. It is not likely ever to be made. This country, with its many races and ethnic minorities, open to massive and continuing immigration from many parts of the world, with a large economically disadvantaged population, is not soon going to resemble Japan. There is little profit in recommending draconian educational measures that appear positively Prussian in their inspiration. The problem, indeed, may be to overcome certain of the country's continued obeisances in the direction of Vienna, Freud's Vienna.[36] America's school problem is not caused by the fact that the parents of too many of its children are physically disabled, drink too much, are temporarily or habitually depressed, neglect and abuse their children, or do any number of other things to harm them. All these conditions certainly exacerbate the teachers' problems as they do those of physicians; they cannot be used to excuse or explain away inadequate instruction. There is very little that the schools can do to remedy these home situations. It can, however, if it correctly interprets its mission, create a temporary refuge from these conditions—for some hours of every school day—and it can do so if it understands why it alone is called on to do this difficult, sometimes thankless task. In short, the schools, led by educators, need to know why they exist, why universal access is a challenge, and why no Western democracy has so far met the possibilities of the opportunities offered by it. Only a self-confident profession—a teaching profession that accepts and knows its real worth—that understands what it can do to educate children in the last part of the twentieth century is in a position to alter the schools fundamentally.

As one surveys conditions in the developed world today, one is struck by the fact that while certain institutions are known to work well, some are thought to be almost embarrassingly expensive. Thus, for example, health care in the United States, as elsewhere, has made remarkable strides in recent decades, but is seen to be consuming a disproportionate share of the nation's income. Hospitals and medical care, whether under private or public control, are acknowledged in many countries to have become excessively expensive. The same complaint is not generally made of education or of educational institutions, which is not to say that educational bills are not high or that inflated costs do not generate occasional grievance. The differ-

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ences, however, ought to be noted. Schools in quite different societies, of very different political and social character, are frequently thought to be inadequate. The continuing complaint is not about their cost but about their quality.[37] The prevalence of educational discontents, not least in certain of the more democratic societies of our day, indicates that maintaining educational standards while providing access to all, offering any number of novel services now thought to be essential in motivating students of diverse abilities and interests, creates enormous strains on the system.

The United States may have good reason to worry about why countries as different as Japan and the Soviet Union appear to be doing well in producing what is thought to be a scientifically literate population; why so many of the young in these societies test well, and not only in physics and calculus; why they appear able to master what only a few are able to accomplish in this country. But the explanation of that phenomenon is not a simple one; it is not likely to be remedied by isolated educational reforms. Seeking parity with that accomplishment is neither a mean nor a despicable ambition. It ought, however, to be placed in an educational context that takes some account also of what concern there is in the United States and in many other democracies with numerous other educational objectives—esteeming and accepting, for example, the importance of independence, variety, and uncertainty—acknowledging other values than those reflected in the wish to create an efficient and stable work force. In our desire to propitiate the old nineteenth-century gods, to argue once again for the virtues of industriousness and application, ignoring our characteristic late-twentieth-century consumer frenzy, with its disdain for thrift and economy, we risk losing sight of our failure to retain another old and honored Victorian capacity: *to express and feel outrage*. To direct that outrage against those who are willing to tolerate ignorance, who are prepared to accept illiteracy, settling for custodianship when teaching is so clearly socially mandated, should be the first moral concern of men and women whose zeal is for democratic civilized values, who despise the cunning of those who settle for what exists. This, regrettably, is not happening today, and too few are prepared to look at the political and social scene to explain why this is so.

There is an extraordinary opportunity for Americans to calculate in quite new ways the political and social costs of failing to provide

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an educational fare that is nourishing. The need is clearly to create a greater awareness that civic duty is not exhausted with a readiness to vote in quadrennial elections. Nor can the object simply be to make children more knowledgeable, more able as adults to distinguish between fact and fiction so that they can judge the great public issues that, in theory at least, they will be asked to vote on. Joseph Schumpeter, more than forty years ago, repudiated with justifiable irony so romantic a concept of democracy.[38] Political obligations are clearly of another sort: they involve obedience to the law, resistance to unjust authority, the acceptance of certain civilized social and moral norms, a willingness to serve, and not only in elective or appointive office, a respect for the rights and opinions of others. It is curious how few who have written about school reform in the last year have chosen to dwell on such issues.

It is easy to be ironic about democratic politics; it is difficult to conceive of all the ways that schools, competing necessarily with other institutions, serving quite other purposes, can carve out a role that is distinctively their own. The schools of America fail, whatever the test scores of students may eventually show, when so little effort is made to conceive of how the moral, social, scientific, political, and intellectual dimensions of education are related. Adults, responsible and capable, are urgently needed for teaching. Without becoming rhetorical, maudlin, or self-important, teachers must see themselves as charged with caring for the minds of the young, knowing how little is now being done for all-too-many who view school as a confinement, a corridor, or a comedy. A society that cannot define the role of the teacher—that knows not how to honor the function, that speaks in such forked tongue about its pretended commitments to education—will always misconstrue the possibilities and necessities of schooling. Periodically, as in the United States, it will be driven to a kind of educational jingoism. Lacking any other more compelling social rationale for reform, it will have recourse to brutal and primordial sentiments, implying that "the Japs will get you if you don't watch out," and listening to others respond: "We stand tall; we are really okay, Jack." Both are mistaken. They misconstrue the problem, misperceive the opportunity. Their understanding of contemporary society is limited. Their search is for short-term solutions, immediate gains. They know nothing of the need to nourish the mind, and why this is both a personal and a social necessity that,

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when evaded, will be paid for, particularly in a society that prides itself on its democratic proclivities.

It is time for certain very simple political and economic facts to be confronted. In a society like our own, the middle-class children of successful parents—including those whose incomes are extraordinarily high by any standard—are not likely to opt for teaching as a career. A few may do so; they, however, will always be exceptional. The teaching profession, for the foreseeable future, will recruit principally from families of more modest means. This is not to be deplored. Teaching must be seen as one of the major avenues to economic, personal, and intellectual advancement, particularly for those who are themselves not advantaged. Whatever can be done to make the profession more attractive to tens of thousands of such young men and women—particularly when they are able—ought to be encouraged. If, for example, their educational debts can be forgiven—contingent on their serving for a certain period as teachers—that is pure gain. If their education in school, college, and on the job can be substantially improved precisely because they are so desperately needed as teachers—because the society cannot afford to lose their services to less essential employ—that is also a clear social benefit. If we can get away from the simplistic idea that "service" denotes servility, that the ambitious and intelligent will always opt for what pays the most in a commercial marketplace, we may come to recognize that a new kind of teaching "profession" is in the making, one that is quintessentially modern because it presumes competence, but accepts the fact also that there is no greater good than that based on human association. All this takes for granted that we are able to abandon the equally outlandish idea that education is the concern principally of those who themselves have children—that they ought to pay for what they receive, and that their taxes ought to reflect their situation—and that others will pay for what they themselves receive and use. No idea is more inimical to democracy; no practice is more calculated to cheapen the image of the United States in the world, to make its face less human.

A society that cannot care for its own, that cannot understand the resource represented by its youth, that exercises its imagination principally in evading its educational responsibilities, will always be "second-rate," whatever its gross national product may be, however its elected leaders may prate about its supposed virtues. These last

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remarks are inspired perhaps by the *New York Times* lead story of August 28, 1984, which concerns the honor being done America's teachers by the president of the United States in his announcement that "the first shuttle ride by [a] private citizen [is] to go to [a] teacher." We are told that the hopes of others—"artists, writers, journalists, entertainers, celebrities, and students"—have been dashed, that the president has told educators that "America's Finest" will have a seat on the future flight. One is tempted to say that this, as much as anything else, reveals the contempt of a master politician who understands only too well the infantilism of American society. A second possibility also exists: that it is one more bit of evidence of how zeal and cunning can serve political ends. Will this whole story be read by another age as a superb example of late-twentieth-century American political irony? The reasonable response is neither to mock the man nor to laugh at the proposition that this is a way for all America to be "reminded of the crucial role teachers and education play in the life of our nation."[39] Rather, as with so much else in this year of rhetoric, the influence of zeal and cunning ought not to be underestimated, but it ought to be joined by a preoccupation with how candor and persistence can be made to serve educational purposes, and how much of this depends on there being an educational dialogue in the country that goes far beyond the one opened by the books and commission reports that have made such important contributions to putting education in a prominent place on the nation's agenda. The more difficult task remains—to make the next stage of the political discussion something other than an exercise in guile, rhetoric, and nostalgia.

ENDNOTES

[1] *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform,* published by the National Commission on Excellence in Education, appeared in April 1983. This report, more than any of the others, provided phrases and images that circulated widely, that became the staple of the educational debates that continued throughout 1983 and 1984.

[2] It was *The American Spectator* in its September 1984, issue, vol. 17, no. 9, and particularly the article by Chester E. Finn, Jr., "The Excellence Backlash: Sources of Resistance to Educational Reform," that drew attention to the growing criticism of the recommendations of certain of the major reports.

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[3]Paul E. Peterson, "Did the Education Commissions Say Anything?" *The Brookings Review,* Winter 1983. Peterson was concerned principally with six studies: *A Nation at Risk;* the commissions or task forces convened by the Education Commission of the States; the Business–Higher Education Forum; the Twentieth Century Fund; the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching; the National Science Board.

[4]Ibid., p. 5.

[5]Ibid., p. 6.

[6]Ibid., pp. 6-7.

[7]Ibid. p. 11.

[8]Ibid.

[9]Lawrence A. Cremin, paper delivered at the American Philosophical Society in April 1984. The paper, in its original form, is entitled, "The Popularization of American Education Since World War II." See p. 12.

[10]Ibid.

[11]Ibid., pp. 12-13.

[12]Ibid., p. 2.

[13]It is curious that there has been so little specific study of whether and how the educational problems of children are indeed exacerbated by the employment problems of their parents.

[14]See, for example, Thomas Sowell, *Ethnic America* (New York: Basic Books, 1981). The critical reception of this book—the reviews themselves—tell a great deal about how race and ethnicity are viewed today.

[15]Such analysis, if it is to be made, cannot be based on quantitative data alone. Qualitative differences need also to be explored. The latter are generally thought to be too imprecise to qualify for "scientific" exploration.

[16]The problem of teenage pregnancy is particularly sensitive, and while increasing attention is given to it, the reports are remarkably circumspect. The growth recently of a new kind of complaint—implying that many of these teenage mothers have made a very rational and calculated choice both in becoming pregnant and in choosing to have their babies—may stimulate responses of a kind that have not been made to date. Indeed, it may stimulate a wholly new type of inquiry into such pregnancy among children.

[17]See *The New York Times,* May 27, 1984, p. 1.

[18]See Lawrence A. Cremin, *American Education, the National Experience 1783-1876* (New York: Harper and Row, 1980), p. 424.

[19]See, for example, John B. Anderson, *The American Economy We Need* (New York: Atheneum, 1984), pp. 165-6. Anderson writes: ". . . all schools should be given the resources to initiate special classes for the parents of their students. These classes should be designed to encourage parents to emphasize education at home and to give them the ability to help students with their lessons."

[20]See the remarkable essay by Elizabeth Hardwick, "Domestic Manners," in Stephen R. Graubard (ed.) *A New America?* (New York: Norton, 1978), pp. 1-11.

[21]United Technologies, in its "public service" advertisements, makes a great deal of the danger of "irreparable decline." One such advertisement entitled "Making the Grade," deserves to be given in full; it reads:

> America's economic strength is tied to our capabilities in high technology. So is our national security and our standard of living. Whether it's micro-electronics, robotics, telecommunications, laser optics, or comput-

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ers, high technology is restructuring our economy and changing the way we live.

The American educational system is the bedrock upon which America's leadership in technology rests. Highly skilled people are vital to high technology. Without them, technological creativity could not take place.

America's economic might is in danger of irreparable decline. The reason is simple. When it comes to education, America is slipping into second-rate status. Other countries are outstepping us.

The National Academy of Sciences has surveyed the education that is offered in the Soviet Union, East Germany, China and Japan, and compared it to the U.S. It found that the average length of the school year in those countries is 240 days. Minimal time is lost from absences. In the U.S., the school year averages 180 days but shrinks to 160 because of absences. The school day in those countries is several hours longer than ours, and the school week is longer as well.

The time spent on science and math in their schools is about three times that of even the most science-oriented U.S. students, i.e. those who select four years of science and math in secondary schools.

All students in the Soviet Union are required to complete two years of calculus, five years of physics, four years of chemistry, four years of biology, and five years of algebra. The National Science Foundation reports that 84% of U.S. high school graduates do not take physics, 65% do not take chemistry, and 62% do not take calculus.

These disparities—if they are allowed to continue—can seriously erode America's position in the world. Quality education is an investment in our future. Our prosperity and security depend on it. Our international competitors already do a lot more than we to educate their children for the future.

We urgently need to upgrade our science and math education. Our school systems should increase their minimum requirements of science and math for graduation. Such instruction should begin sooner, the school day should last longer, and the school year should be lengthened as well. And we should pay our teachers more.

These things are only the beginning. Science and math must become an integral part of the American curriculum if America is to maintain its leadership in high technology—and meet future economic challenges with confidence.

[22]See Charles M. Haar, *The Golden Age of American Law* (New York: Braziller, 1965); Paul Starr, *The Social Transformation of American Medicine* (New York: Basic Books, 1982).

[23]See Starr, op. cit., pp. 118-21; 123-26.

[24]It is curious that in the plethora of new books on schools, teachers, and teaching, the issue of trade unionism is scarcely touched. Look, for example, at John I. Goodlad, *A Place Called School* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1984); Ernest L. Boyer, *High School* (New York: Harper and Row, 1983); Diane Ravitch, *The Troubled Crusade* (New York: Basic Books, 1983).

[25]The issue of school "reputation" remains immensely mysterious—less perhaps in how it is initially acquired than in how it is maintained, often when the

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distinctions on which it may have been originally based are lost or substantially diminished.

[26]See Gordon L. McAndrew, "The High-School Principal: Man in the Middle," *Daedalus,* Summer 1981.

[27]Long-term unemployment, particularly of the young, has become a preoccupying issue in several industrial societies. It figured almost not at all in the presidential electoral campaign of 1984.

[28]See, in a quite different context, the provocative and useful analysis provided by Albert O. Hirschman, *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970).

[29]A study of the literature on how Hispanic Americans have sought to exercise influence in the schools—and not only in behalf of bilingual education—will suggest how important the subject is and how little has been done with it.

[30]The National Commission on Excellence in Education is much concerned with documenting and publicizing business initiatives in the educational domain.

[31]See *Daedalus,* Fall 1981. The issue, entitled "America's Schools: Portraits and Perspectives," offers interpretations of different kinds of "exemplary" schools.

[32]Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (London: Colonial Press, 1900), vol. 1, ch. XV, p. 269, which deals with "Unlimited Power of the Majority in the United States and its Consequences." Tocqueville writes: "The majority lives in the perpetual practice of self-applause, and there are certain truths which the Americans can only learn from strangers or from experience."

[33]Michael Rutter, et al., *Fifteen Thousand Hours* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979).

[34]I know of no comparable American book. What would a study of ten schools in New York, Boston, or Washington, D.C., for example, reveal? What reticences would need to be respected in any such study?

[35]Rutter, op. cit. See his valuable introduction in which he speaks about previous studies.

[36]Charles Chatfield, headmaster of Commonwealth School, used a variant of these metaphors in a personal letter.

[37]See *Daedalus,* Spring 1984. In the section entitled "Nordic Voices," several speak of the condition of education in Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland, and Iceland. These remarks suggest that even in these countries the problems are serious, the disappointments fairly considerable.

[38]Joseph Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1950, third edition), pp. 261-3.

[39]*The New York Times,* August 28, 1984, p. 1.

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Harry Eckstein

Civic Inclusion and Its Discontents

THE SUBJECT OF THIS ESSAY is what, for want of a conventional term, I call "civic inclusion": in essence, the processes by which segments of society previously excluded from membership (in Charles Tilly's sense) in political and socio-economic institutions are incorporated into these institutions as "citizens." The *problem* of the paper arises from what we might call the discontents of the "civic society"—the highly inclusive society. There are dramatic discrepancies between what was expected to follow from civic inclusion and what has in fact happened. My proposed *explanation* of these discrepancies rests on the notion that there exists an authority-culture of the lower classes of society—the beneficiaries of civic inclusion—that has been only poorly understood by the higher-class proponents of inclusion. The lower-class culture is not pretty, particularly when seen from the perspective of certain common liberal values. However, this does not imply acceptance of the idea that a distinctive, self-perpetuating culture of poverty exists (as argued, for instance, by E. Franklin Frazier, Nathan Glazer, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, and perhaps also Oscar Lewis, the giant of the literature on the "culture of poverty"), and especially not that the lower classes deal with authority in reprehensible ways. Rather, I consider lower-class authority to be a positive and adaptive response to the defining trait of poverty: being compelled to live with and manage high scarcity. The authority-culture of the poor is all the more resistant to change because of this.

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CIVIC INCLUSION AND MODERN SOCIETY

Civic inclusion has two distinct but not separable meanings. First, it refers to the changing of "subjects" into "citizens." Ordinarily, different members of society have different degrees and kinds of access to its loci of authority, influence, and participation—that is, to the structures and processes of governance. In regard to this, Tilly makes a distinction between people who are "members" and those who are "challengers" in the structures that govern social institutions,[1] and although it is a great oversimplification to put it in these terms (there being many degrees of "membership"), thinking of people as included in and excluded from decision-making structures will do here. Certainly, a major threshold is crossed when excluded groups receive formal entitlements to inclusion, such as (in polities) the vote and right to hold office, or (in businesses) the right to participate in management. Second, civic inclusion refers to the gaining of access to institutions that provide capacities and resources, chiefly educational institutions, by groups formerly denied it.

Since early modern times, there has occurred in developed societies a seemingly ineluctable tendency toward civic inclusion in these two senses, in both the larger and smaller institutions of societies. The process started in politics, through extension of the suffrage and reforms of recruitment to administrative positions; it continued in the provision of access to education—first to elementary schooling, then to secondary education, and then to higher education; now it goes on in workplaces through the spread of mechanisms for participation in their governance.

Something like a genuine developmental process seems to be involved.[2] Tocqueville discovered it long ago, in America, where he found "a fundamental equality" (not least in the lack of "fixed distinctions" in regard to powers and privileges). He soon came to see in equalization a common thread in all of history, only most evident in the most "advanced" society. The process was an "invariable tendency of events," "a providential fact," "the habitual course of nature," "the past and future of history." "In perusing the pages of our history," he wrote, "we shall scarcely meet with a single great event, in the lapse of seven hundred years, which has not turned to the advantage of equality."[3]

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Tocqueville thought that America's "fundamental equality" accounted for every distinctive aspect of American life. By extension, one can think of processes of civic inclusion as critical sources of institutional changes in all modern societies. Certain ways in which inclusion engenders change in institutions are highly obvious; for example, through its effects on the size and complexity of structures and on what Durkheim called "social density." Others are less obvious, such as its effects on the heterogeneity of the membership of organizations, or the need for the newly included to adapt to old institutions and of the institutions to be adapted to new members. When decision-structures become greatly enlarged and more complex; when members of diverse social subcultures come to constitute a common "membership" in such structures; when people not yet adapted to the structures, or to one another, must work together, as a single citizenry—then a highly consequential, probably dramatic dynamic process is inevitably set in motion.

That process filled Tocqueville with a "kind of religious dread." No one, he wrote, could say where the process would lead, since "all terms of comparison are wanting." Nothing less than a new "science of equality" was needed to cope sensibly with the process. Such a science—a set of pertinent theories—did not exist, "even in embryo." One simply tends not to think when "launched in the middle of [a] rapid stream."[4]

We may know more than Tocqueville did about the extent and effects of equalization, but we nevertheless still lack a fundamental theoretical understanding of the process. My purpose here is to make a substantial beginning toward such understanding.

EXPECTATIONS AND DISILLUSIONS

The process of civic inclusion has always begun with blithe expectations—which have invariably been disappointed. The response has always been more inclusion, or else cynicism and reaction. In this section of the paper, I want to illustrate this cruel course principally in regard to political and educational inclusion, with briefer remarks about workplace inclusion. In the following section, I will identify recurring themes in the literature on disillusion and provide an "explanation-sketch" to account for these themes.

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Political Inclusion[5]

The watershed-period of general political inclusion occurred around 1865-75. In America, the Fourteenth Amendment, which guaranteed to all the privileges and immunities of citizens, was adopted in 1868; in Britain, the Reform Act of 1867 gave workingmen, including a sizable proportion of unskilled laborers, the preponderance of the vote; in France, the Organic Law of 1875 instituted manhood suffrage. Comparable events occurred in other Western countries.

These events were the culmination of prolonged agitation for reform, which was based generally on expectations like those of the British "philosophic radicals." Schumpeter's characterization of the "classical theory of democracy" is a caricature of these ideas, but an accurate one.[6]

Bentham's fundamental prescription for sound representative government was universal manhood suffrage. Only general participation could—and would—lead to policies in the general interest; anything else, like doctrines of natural rights or social contracts ("nonsense upon stilts"), only camouflaged the exploitative corruption of the legal oligarchy—corruption that has since been documented copiously.[7] To universal manhood suffrage were added annual parliaments and vote by secret ballot as guarantees against both the possibility that representatives elected by the general public might still pursue their own special interests and to prevent electoral corruption. The utilitarians' political scripture, James Mill's article on representative government in the supplement to the *Encyclopedia Britannica* of 1825, reiterates the point. The "security of unselfish interest," wrote Mill, could only be attained through an "identity of interest" between public and polity, brought about by full political inclusion. And it *would* be thus attained, for it was impossible for a community to know its good and yet to act against it: the community would know its good "by instinct," plus some education to inculcate civic character. John Stuart Mill emphasized more strongly the need for education in forming such character, but also held that popular participation would itself provide it.[8]

Political inclusion, in short, was expected to end the rule of "sinister interests" (J.S. Mill's phrase) and to begin an era of genuinely public-spirited rule. Even more revealing than what was

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explicitly expected are matters not even thought about by the advocates of political inclusion: that the existence of a very numerous, much more heterogeneous citizenry might compel structural changes in government and politics; that far from welcoming inclusion, many citizens would exclude themselves through political apathy; that the mass citizenry, which would need leadership chiefly for tutelage for a limited period, might in fact lower the intellectual level of politics; and that the laboring classes might be only weakly attached to liberal values and might even be attracted to despotism.

Even on the other side, among those who sought to protect privileged interests, well-considered dissent from the radicals' arguments was barely heard. Dissent came later, after about a generation of inclusive polities,[9] and when it did come, in reaction to earlier, inflated visions, it came mainly in the form of great—sometimes sad, sometimes bitter—disillusions.

The majority, of course, clung to the illusion, as they always do, but the political writings of the giants of the period 1890-1920 lean toward the opposite extreme. Some of the writers involved remained gentle, if disenchanted, democrats—like the Fabian Graham Wallas, who wondered, in 1908, whether representative government as such might not "prove to be a mistake."[10] Others ranged to the wild extreme of Gustave Le Bon, whose astonishingly influential study *The Crowd*—an attempt explicitly to understand the behavior of the popular classes as they entered into political life—reads like class prejudice raised to the level of racial hatred.[11] S.E. Finer, with reason, attributes the growing doubts about the happy visions of the nineteenth century to the decay of "the liberal-democratic synthesis"—the reactions against positive science, against "rationalist" assumptions, indeed against the possibility of any fixed knowledge at all.[12]

What ideas about the effects of political inclusion ran through the literature of discontent? First, and perhaps most conspicuous, the idea that political inclusion does not really equalize, but only restratifies political life was progressively elaborated. The period 1890-1920 (from Mosca's *Elementi* and Michels's *Political Parties,* to Weber's "Politics as a Vocation") saw the discovery of "ruling elites" in democratized societies and, not least and most emphatically, within the political organizations of the newly included themselves—the "least-likely" cases for "oligarchy."[13] Mosca and others discerned in this a sort of steady state of rule by minorities over

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majorities. But the new ruling elites were novel groupings, not to be confused with the old patrician "political class." Unlike the latter, they were neither precisely defined nor explicitly legitimated as a privileged political class. They rested on a plebeian basis and were recruited in undefined, murky ways. Often, they "circulated" into and joined old elites. Ironically, they were empowered by the very legitimating myths that their existence contradicted. Something unprecedented and wholly unexpected clearly was being generated by political inclusion. J.L. Talmon has referred to its extreme as "totalitarian democracy,"[14] and he locates the origins of that phenomenon in the most "inclusive" political theories of all, those stemming from Rousseau.

Second, a phenomenon now so taken for granted that we reflect little on its consequences was discovered, that of self-exclusion from participatory "membership."[15] The idea that formal entitlements and actual use of them might not much correspond was only fuzzy and embryonic during the period. Moderate writers like Wallas or Bodley were scandalized by the apathy they discerned in democratized polities. Wallas guessed that fewer than 10 percent of British males were really active in politics; even those who vote, he wrote, "shrink with an instinctive dread" from more taxing political participation.[16] Bodley, in regard to France, extended that "dread" even to voting, which, he said, many avoid "for unalloyed recreation."[17] It is, of course, Michels who holds the patent on the discovery of the institutional effects of self-exclusion. The result of broad political inclusion, according to Michels, was not simply new ruling minorities, but "gratitude" for domination, the emergence of leaders as revered cult-figures, the critical rule—as the source of power in mass politics—of sheer energy and forcefulness (not, as it had once been, birth or cultivation), and control over media that may inform but that also may manipulate "public opinion" and glorify leaders.[18]

Third, from the late nineteenth century on, numerous writers (e.g., Tarde, Sighele, Burckhardt, and, most notably, Le Bon) argued that the general public was not a "public" at all, but, in effect, a "crowd." The implication was that political inclusion would reduce the intellectual level of politics and thus radically alter the structures and modes of political deliberation—for the worse.

Crowd psychology was developed in contrast to a psychology associated with the advocacy of political inclusion. Wallas called it

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the psychology of "enlightened self-interest"; we refer to its postulates as "rationalist," both in regard to methods (deliberation, discussion) and ends: the perception of identity between one's own benefits and those of the community. Given the bewilderment that followed experience with political inclusion, attempts were bound to be made to revise or discard the psychological baggage attached to its advocacy by developing a "social psychology." The only available model seemed hopelessly unrealistic. This was Tocqueville's conception of the American public association, on which J.S. Mill based his vision of the members of the inclusive polity: people who enlarge one another's feelings and develop their minds through reciprocal influence; people interlinked and civilized by the newspapers *(sic);* people cultivated by political discussion that makes them conscious that they are particles in "a great community."[19] The countermodel developed as more realistic was derived from the behavior of "crowds," chiefly revolutionary crowds. These, after all, furnished the only conspicuous historical examples of "popular" behavior on which a drastically different social psychology might be based—one that might achieve its major end, that of accounting for the vast differences between what had been expected of broad political inclusion and what had actually resulted.

In general, the new "psychology of the popular mind," as might be expected from its prototype, depicted a mass very far from civilized, one, in fact, verging on the barbaric. The crowd displayed "socially induced stupidity," "mediocre wits," high receptivity to fraud, hero worship, admiration for criminals (Le Bon), suggestibility, incapacity for serious discussion, submissiveness, self-prostration before "celebrity" (Michels, citing Tarde and Sighele), soullessness, intellectual proletarianization (Weber), and so on.[20]

A fourth idea that runs through the literature of discontent is that the political organizations of the newly included, far from being organs of political education and advancing public interests, are in effect little more than "gangs"—that is, mechanisms for despoliation, not least of the newly included themselves. Writers on democratic politics between 1890 and 1920 discovered the political machine as an intrinsic feature of the nonexclusive polity. Its prototype was to be found, as was Tocqueville's conception of popular associations, in American cities.

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The "machine" can be regarded as the logical institutional counterpart of the social-psychological idea of the crowd.[21] Its internal structure was (is) extremely hierarchical: monocratic at the top, with those below the boss strictly disciplined, virtually in a paramilitary manner. The machine's purpose was not even really political; it pursued offices for "commercial" reasons. Weber thought of the bosses as political condottieri, "capitalist adventurers" operating in a political market, and he argued that their existence was an inevitable consequence of having included in the polity people with no choice but to live "off politics," not "for it." He referred to the bosses also as a species of tax farmers,[22] while James Bryce compared them to stockbrokers and dry-goods traders, and, less amiably, called them street vultures.[23] Their chief means for realizing their objectives were spoils, bribes, favors, electoral corruption, intimidation, and, if necessary, violence. Between them and their lieutenants and followers a sort of feudal relationship existed, as it did in the aboriginal robber-bands: protection, favors, and "intermediation" with the world of jobs and power were exchanged for loyal support in the pursuit of great political profits.

Popular leadership, then, a generation after the watershed period of political inclusion, was perceived as a cynical hoax. The fraud was made possible by public apathy, the crowd's submissiveness, its blindness to its own larger interests, and, not least, by petty but pressing material needs and the necessity to link the new citizens with what were to them remote political authorities.

The disillusions with broad political incorporation tended for a long time (and to some extent still) to be dismissed by many scholars as the work of cranks, bigots, and misanthropes. No doubt this is true in some cases. But almost a century later, after much more intensive and rigorous political inquiry, the discontents of the earlier period have only deepened or undergone marginal revisions. By now, the early discontents have come to be expressed in a set of large subfields of positive political theory—studies of political participation, of national and community power structures, of public opinion and political behavior, and of party structures and processes.[24]

Some of the more influential scholars in these subfields, despite the now prevalent tone of placid acceptance, in fact express even more profound disillusions than the earlier writers. For instance, C. Wright Mills's conception of the contemporary power-elite is of something

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far more shadowy and harder to crack than was Mosca's or Michels's. Mills regarded it, somberly, as an elite united not by land, or status, or instruction, or even property, but by sheer organizational power as such.[25] The most influential countermodel, Dahl's, offers only "dispersed inequalities," scattered by narrow interests and attention, as an alternative.[26]

So it goes also in other elaborations of the earlier literature. The voluminous, now widely comparative studies of political participation have arrived laboriously at precise numerical confirmation of what Wallas had already said in an informed offhand guess. "Crowd theory" has become the theory of "mass society" of writers like Schumpeter, Ortega, Mannheim, Lederer, Arendt, Kornhauser, and, perhaps most bleakly of all, Mills; and the notion of "mass society" differs little from that of the "crowd" even in mood, its principal function, after all, having been to help us understand the occurrence of totalitarian horrors.[27] No doubt the predatory adventure-capitalism of the political machines has been toned down. But we have become far more sophisticated, if less shocked, than earlier writers (like Bryce) about political corruption and crime; and we tend to analyze political wheeling and dealing as the practice of rational prudence—the art of democratic princes. In fact, just as early adventure-capitalism (as Weber argued) evolved into rational, sober, "modern" capitalism, so, in the later literature, Bryce's street-vultures have become Schumpeter's chilly entrepreneurial "dealers in votes"[28] and the rational maximizers of political benefits of Downs and Riker, virtually unencumbered by "economically" inconvenient values and convictions in the competition for political power.[29] The idea of politics as a marketplace has evolved from contempt into analytical orthodoxy. And instead of a politics of public interests, much of the contemporary literature on democratic politics has been summarized as depicting a "politics of private desires."[30]

Educational Inclusion[31]

Since democracy and education always have been linked, it was natural that remedies for the flaws of political inclusion should be sought above all in education, by its expansion to the new citizens and in pedagogic reforms.

In England, already in the eighteenth century, small groups of "enlightened" businessmen and professionals formed societies (like

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the Lunar Society and the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society) to promote popular schooling in order to counteract patrician domination and corruption.[32] Bentham advocated popular education as a complement to the universal franchise; London University, in fact, was founded in response to his treatise *Chrestomathia*. James Mill, following Helvétius, held that education alone produces differences in people:

> If you take men who bring into the world with them the original constituents of their nature . . . [that is, if you leave out imbeciles], you may regard the whole of this great mass of mankind as equally susceptible of mental excellence. . . . The power of education embraces . . . the highest state, not only of actual, but of possible perfection.[33]

For democracy, he argued further, a general education that "modifies the mind" and affects "the train of feelings" was needed—in short, education that breeds civic character.

The history of educational inclusion, viewed in broad perspective, thus parallels that of political inclusion. Looked at more closely, however, educational inclusion seems more a remedial response to the flaws of political inclusion, or a supplement to it, so that the expectations associated with it could be achieved.

In Britain, at the time of the Reform Act of 1867, it was realized that "we must educate our [new] masters"; but, though numerous commissions studied education and recommended marginal incorporative reforms, a national system of free, compulsory primary education was not established until the Bryce Commission of 1895 had reported, and Parliament responded in Balfour's Act of 1902. The Bryce Commission also was the first to assert a general right to secondary education, although Balfour's Act only empowered local governments to provide such education if they wished. Only in 1944, in Butler's Education Act, was a system of universal, free secondary education established.

In the United States, the progress of public, or "common," schooling has been less simple because of decentralization. Its broad outline, however, is much the same. An intense agitation for public schooling, concerning especially the link between education and effective democratic citizenship, occurred during the latter half of the nineteenth century,[34] the period of educational reformers like Henry Barnard, John Pierce, and, above all, Horace Mann. The schools that

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Mann wanted were to be "common schools," not in the sense of the German *Volksschulen* (schools for common people), but schools common to all: open to all, uniform for rich and poor alike, admitting children regardless of creed or class. "In the warm associations of childhood, Mann saw the opportunity to kindle a spirit of amity and respect which the conflicts of adult life could never destroy. In social harmony he located the primary goal of popular education."[35]

The key to such "civic" schooling lay, Mann believed, in popular control of education. In effect, he projected the creed of political inclusion upon education: lay control per se would continuously define and inculcate in children the "public philosophy." By 1860, the majority of states provided primary schools, and about 50 percent of children received some formal education.[36] A few states were also beginning to provide secondary education and public universities. By the 1890s, free, public primary education was nearly universal, and public education beyond that level was spreading rapidly. The expansion and democratization of higher education continued with increasing momentum until by 1970 about three out of four children finished high school (in 1929, three out of four did not), and 40 percent of the college-age population was enrolled in institutions of higher learning (compared with 14 percent in 1939).[37] These institutions, moreover, had substantially achieved the "impossible" objective of performing both elite functions (transmitting high culture) and popular functions (preparing for vocations and for public service)—something that even the radicals of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had scarcely envisioned.[38]

Late in the nineteenth century—and ever since—educational inclusion in America proceeded along two paths in the attempt to realize the aims of "common" schooling. One involved dealing with discrimination in access to schooling, which culminated in 1954 in *Brown* v. *Board of Education*. The other, just as important, concerned reform of the curriculum for the sake of effective citizenship. The seminal figure in the agitation for curricular change was William Torrey Harris; the towering genius, John Dewey. Harris subscribed, to an extraordinary degree, to the old creed that education could and would make good democratic citizens and fulfilled human beings. "Common schools increased opportunity; they taught morality and citizenship; they encouraged a talented leadership."[39] To do this,

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however, the schools' course of study, Harris argued, must be changed fundamentally, from conventional rote-learning of dreary, deadening subjects to learning that would cultivate both self-discipline and "self-active" individuals. How to cultivate such individuals through schooling was the central subject of Dewey's *Democracy and Education*. The essential message of Dewey's work was that education proper to democracy must not just provide schooling as such, even on a nondiscriminatory basis, but must end an even more pernicious kind of educational division, that between broadly human study, which forms complete persons, and instruction only for "utilitarian" ends, for making a livelihood, for which "mechanical efficiency in reading, writing, spelling, figuring, together with attainment of a certain amount of muscular dexterity suffice." Such conditions "infect the education called liberal with illiberality." Education in democracies, first and foremost, must be "relevant to the problems of living together" and must "develop social insight and interest."[40]

The great expectations that moved the process of educational inclusion, then, were exactly those associated with political inclusion. The fundamental assumption on which these expectations rested was, in Sir William Jones's phrase, "that all men are born equal, with an equal capacity for improvement." Even if individual and public interests did not naturally coincide (as Locke thought, and William T. Harris emphatically did not), a proper civic education would produce, in all social strata, a populace of harmonious, public-spirited citizens and able leaders. It would, in addition, promote social mobility and lessen nonpolitical inequalities.

As in the case of political inclusion, what was not contemplated is even more revealing than what was expected. No one thought, for example, that the children of the newly included might, in certain ways, exclude themselves from the benefits of education; nor that the changed demographic character of educational institutions might perforce change their structures and processes in undesired ways; nor that mass education might willy-nilly lower the intellectual level of schooling.

The original pervasive optimism has in recent years been deflated severely. The panacea has come to be seen more and more as itself a problem that has, if anything, reinforced the failures of political inclusion.

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The first notes of disillusion were, in fact, sounded already in the 1890s, most strongly in Joseph Rice's muckraking articles about public education in *The Forum*,[41] which were based not on hopeful thinking, but on close study of actualities—extensive fieldwork, as we would now call it. Rice depicted a deadly boring and shallow system of education, conducted by incompetent teachers whose main instructional tools were singsong drills, rote repetition, and meaningless verbiage. The principal cause of this, he argued, was the use of schools as objects of despoliation by the political machines—the corrupt hiring of untrained teachers for the usual political benefits. Public apathy made this state of affairs possible in the first place. In gist, Rice found that a flaw of political inclusion itself (machine politics) poisoned the remedy. Readers were scandalized by Rice's articles, but more by the nasty, hard-to-swallow things he wrote than by the conditions he portrayed.

In recent years, skepticism about the value of schooling for democratic socialization has grown—at any rate, of schooling as it is in fact provided. A considerable literature on the subject has accumulated since the early 1970s[42] that includes the standard text on political socialization by Dawson, Prewitt, and Dawson, as well as studies by Jennings, Ehman, Niemi, Mercer, Shaver, and others. For good measure, the new literature also is skeptical about the value of schooling for achievement in general—that is, for social mobility and equalization.

The standard explanation of the failure of schooling to fulfill its expected democratizing function is the theory of the "hidden curriculum," which says, in essence, that schools by and large pay much lip service to democratic values and, indeed, teach these values in "social science" (civics) courses, but negate in virtually all they do what they preach: they practice hierarchy, not democracy; teachers control the curriculum, and administrators control behavior outside the classroom; students are not treated as equals, but are placed in invidious ability groupings. And instead of self-discipline, practiced by "self-active" individuals, there is constant surveillance; instead of social harmony (living "together"), egoistic competition for grades and status occurs; instead of self-development through broad educational experiences, there is stultifying standardization.[43] Exceptions exist, but not in schools catering to the newly included—those

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presumably most in need of democratic socialization—but in middle-class schools.[44]

In a recent article, Richard Merelman both amends and reinforces the theory of the hidden curriculum, the latter by providing a rationale for why the curriculum exists. It is based largely on one of the best intensive studies of the consequences of educational inclusion, Mary Metz's study of the effects of racial desegregation on two junior high schools in Berkeley, California, *Classrooms and Corridors*.[45] Metz makes much of the fact that schools do not just perform external functions—that is, they do not simply educate. They are organizations, and like all such, must satisfy internal requisites. Above all, they must maintain internal order; hence the juxtaposition of "classrooms" and "corridors" in the title and the organization of Metz's study. Obviously, without internal order, no sort of education can effectively be provided, nor can education occur if the special ability of teachers to impart knowledge is denied. The critical democratic values of popular sovereignty and equality in authority, Merelman argues, are clearly inconsistent with these inescapable requisites. Schools can adapt to the values only by teaching "civics" poorly (and social science teachers *are* particularly poor), by phony grading of undemanding studies, and by treating controversial values as fixed facts, which prevents training in the formation of democratic agreement by debate.[46]

The argument that the value of order is an obstacle to democratic socialization in schools clearly has merit. Schools deal with children who hardly are capable of fully governing and teaching themselves. Because pupils must adapt to the schools' internal order from backgrounds that are different in structure, internalized norms cannot fully be relied upon to do the work of external direction. This is true even of schools like the British public schools, elite schools that are almost total institutions, that practice a highly developed form of student governance, and most of whose student-members enter after highly congruent experience in preparatory schools. In the literature on the British public schools, as in much of the recent literature on other schools, the issues of adaptation and maladaptation are of critical importance.[47]

The crucial thesis of Metz's study, however, is not that the need for internal order is *always* at odds with democratic values. Rather, much more poignantly, and much more to the point here, it is that

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educational inclusion has greatly exacerbated the problem of maintaining order in schools. In so doing, it has made more tenuous any sort of education, but most of all, the sort of broad, reflective "developmental" education that, it had long been argued, alone could produce effective democratic citizens.

In the first place, Metz found that desegregation brought into schools students whose attitudes toward authority in classrooms and to their educational processes were notably different from those of middle-class white students. Lower-track students (almost entirely black) were on the surface unquestioningly submissive, accepting "what they should learn, how they should learn it, or how they should behave" as "inevitable," but without embracing the norms and rules of the school. They did not question the school's character, but they also "remained alien and separate within it." Hence, they both accepted authority (or, better, established power) and tried "in the first instance . . . to fool the teacher." They did not experience the school as a place they could affect in any way or as "an instrument to meet their own experienced needs." The most that was hoped for was "an absence of active pain"; the ideal was "boisterous play and little work." Their passive, self-exclusive attitudes contrasted sharply with those of students in the higher tracks—mostly white and middle class (with a sprinkling of blacks). The latter questioned teachers much more and tended to consider themselves the teachers' "junior partners" in decision-making. This was true most of all of students from upper-middle-class families.[48]

Second, in this way, educational inclusion largely destroyed the schools Metz studied as homogeneous "moral orders," orders in which the members largely agree on organizational goals (in the old middle-class schools, mainly the goal of education for achievement), on the means needed to achieve the goals, and on the authority relations proper to these means. The mere presence of submissive, unmotivated lower-class students was not the only source of this difficulty; even more important was the increased social heterogeneity of the schools' members—which, obviously, is always the result of incorporative processes.

Metz thinks of the definition of classroom relationships as a process of mutual adjustment in which pupils' and teachers' dispositions and perceptions interact as challenge and response: on one side, teachers are "tested," either intellectually or by teasing or disorderly

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conduct; on the other, teachers respond by "arranging" classrooms, by offering exchanges (grades), by persuasion or manipulation.[49] This view is widely shared by other contemporary "educationists," and corresponds to Crozier's conception of operative bureaucratic structures as shaped by complex group dynamics. Children are perceived as active contestants in the definition of classroom situations; the order of the classroom constantly is "worked out."

It should be evident that the more heterogeneous in background and attitudes are pupils, the more difficult the process of working out of moral orders becomes. Where moral order in classrooms is highly tenuous, two kinds of teacher-styles, Metz argues, tend to take over: one is proto-authority (para-authority?), which aims only at maintaining obedience, keeping pupils busy and out of trouble; the other is nondirective guidance, which, in gist, means copping out—abdicating the teachers' responsibilities and leaving pupils to work out their own "development." One style will hardly shape democratic character; the other will not shape anything at all.[50]

Schools use a simple practice to reduce the problems stemming from heterogeneity: they place pupils in different tracks—in Metz's schools, four of them. Something like the kind of schooling that the old pedagogic philosophers considered appropriate to effective citizenship, as well as achievement in the broader sense, goes on in the upper tracks (Metz calls it developmental teaching), along with the older, less participatory kind of pedagogy incorporative teaching, which Harris and Dewey also valued.[51] But the lower the track, the less this is the case. A kind of aimlessness takes over at the bottom: authoritarian dominance or uncaring near-anarchy. Since the order of the tracks largely follows that of social stratification, we may infer that inclusive schooling, however egalitarian in appearance, only maintains inequality. At most, it seems to provide an outside chance to a few specially gifted and motivated lower-class children to be co-opted into the milieus of the higher social classes.

The themes of discontent with political inclusion thus are echoed in Metz's study of educational inclusion. One is self-exclusion; a second, the maintenance, perhaps even reinforcement, of inequalities (elitism) in the guise of apparent equalization. Merelman misses Metz's explanation of these unexpected flaws of educational inclusion—that is, that they result essentially from heterogeneity in schools. This is apparent in the remedies he proposes: to improve the

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quality of teachers of social science; to set minimum levels of classroom performance (for genuine equality in grading); not to obscure the distinction between facts and values, so that public discussion of the latter can occur in schools.[52] Merelman's culprits—as in the past, when illusions were intact—are the teachers and the curriculum, not the pupils. And again, as before, only some marginal adjustments in the teachers and curriculum will, he thinks, remedy the shortcomings of the incorporative process in education. Metz's analysis plumbs much greater depths.

The difficulties that Metz describes are recurrent themes in the growing literature about what goes on in the newly inclusive schools. That literature is particularly rich in Britain, no doubt because education has long been perceived as fundamental to British social and political structure.[53] I will summarize the chief points that emerge in the literature, without going into the rich, ethnographic details that scholars have used to support them.

First, a large proportion of lower-class pupils in secondary schools seem to be concerned mainly with somehow getting through them, painlessly if possible, and without much exertion. Schools are "gaols," "stalags," places to be endured before beginning work—*real* life. Pupils who conform do so, in large part, because they see no alternative, and are considered "creeps" who "suck up" to teachers by most of their fellows. Many adapt by "retreating," "working the system," "making out," "getting by." Some do their own "preparing for life"—like the girls observed by Peter Woods, who "spend their day doing each other's hair," in preparation for work as hairdressers. Some spend their time in classes ignoring the lessons, daydreaming, gossiping. A major technique used to "get through" is "having a laugh": infusing hostile alien surroundings with fun and zest—"mucking about," playing pranks. This antischool (self-exclusive) culture, writes Woods (about an English secondary modern school), is "influenced by locally derived working-class values"; that is, the lower-class pupils' parents do not dissuade such aimlessness, but, if anything, encourage it.[54]

Second, just as most lower-class pupils seem most concerned with somehow getting through, so apparently are their teachers. The hidden curriculum, as discerned by Woods, really is "a hidden pedagogy of survival." The resources that teachers use to survive range (echoing Metz) from being blindly authoritarian ("teaching

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them right," "breaking their wills," "keeping them down") mindless drills, to convenient exchanges ("you play ball with me, and I'll play ball with you"—i.e., I'll be undemanding, playful, entertaining), to teaching simply as ritual or passing time doing pointless things.[55] In essence, pupils who disdain education deal, to a great extent, with teachers who do not provide it—a mutual adaptation that works, but hardly as proponents of educational inclusion expected.

Third, teachers deal with the need to demonstrate pedagogic success by blatant abuses of the system of "tracks" or "streams." They steer pupils likely to do well (mostly middle-class pupils) into the tracks that aim at higher education. Students of lower-class background tend to be firmly guided into lower, often dead-end tracks, and perfunctory instruction often keeps them in those tracks, headed only for manual or domestic labor. Teachers discourage lower-class pupils who aim high ("pretenders") and encourage those who aim lower than they should ("underbidders"), sometimes over the pupils' active protests. The overall result, of course, is the maintenance of old patterns of stratification; indeed, it is the legitimation of largely ascriptive differences by a mockery of achievement.[56]

Fourth, much of the literature on the new inclusive schools shows that the types of pupils recently included behave according to sets of "rules" perceived as deviant, even delinquent, by those in authority. No other subject of study has provided more ammunition for the "labeling" theory of deviance.[57] In general, the rules that lower-class pupils act by tend to give the appearance of irrationality, provocation, impulsiveness, insolence, even proneness to violence and its counterpart, submissiveness to demonstrated strength. They thus evoke the descriptions of the crowd as a model alternative to rational publics. Perhaps the most vivid depiction of these rules, and of the behavior to which they lead, is provided by Herbert Foster, who spent many years teaching in American ghetto schools and training others to do so. The rules Foster describes, in exquisite detail and with unusual honesty (since he obviously dislikes what he describes), he considers evolved "from the urban black male's culture and life style as it is played out in the ghetto's streets and street corners."[58] Their object, above all, is to test the teacher's mettle, especially his physical courage and acceptance of physicality (contests of strength, sexuality) as a condition of legitimacy. The ruleful contests include: *ribbin'*—taunting, denigrating, making fun of people, from their

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clothing to parts of their bodies; *shuckin' and jivin'*—mock subservience, double talk; *woofin'*—vicious verbal attacks, acting crazy; *the dozens*—insult games intended to make tempers snap; and outright *physical provocation*. Very few teachers win these contests for the right to receive compliance. Beginning optimistically, the majority proceed, via "rejection," to the exaction of fearful, blind discipline in doing petty busywork. At best, they achieve grudging submission. Only about 2 to 3 percent, writes Foster, succeed in establishing genuine pedagogic legitimacy—and thus can really educate.

The discrepancies between these findings and the expectations of Bentham, Mill, Mann, Harris, and Dewey hardly could be larger. The discontents with educational inclusion are still embryonic. But one may guess that they will be even greater than those with political inclusion—if only because education still is regarded as the critical source of effective democratic citizenship.

Workplace Inclusion

Education, of course, may involve either schooling or learning by experience. Recently, the creed that education will form effective democratic citizens has begun to emphasize the latter, particularly in the workplace—which is, after all, along with the family, the institution in which most adults' lives are to the greatest degree immersed. By participating in the direction of the workplace, Carole Pateman has argued, workers will acquire both the sense that they can be effective in microcosmic contexts and confidence in their ability to influence decisions. This in turn will lead to actual participation—first, at low, immediately salient levels (shopfloor conditions); then, in "management" and the still larger, still more remote context of the polity.[59] In short, workplace inclusion now is supposed to accomplish the task of educational inclusion: forming self-active citizens.

Given the already copious literature on the subject, workplace inclusion warrants more extensive treatment in my argument than space allows.[60] It will be sufficient to say here, however, that discontents with workplace inclusion are common. Workers tend, much more than expected, to exclude themselves from the opportunities offered them to participate—less from participation in decisions about their own work, more from higher management decisions, in fact, from any decision beyond the workteam. Correlates to a sense

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that one's actions might affect decisions are low. If shopfloor participation leads to anything, it is the "active" use of leisure time.[61] Much of the impetus for schemes of worker-participation in management, or QWL (quality of work life), seems to come from above, from enlightened graduates of schools of management or from managers who would rather avoid high labor turnover and dissatisfaction.[62] It has also been found that self-governance at the workplace or employee ownership appeals mostly to workers who already hold bourgeois values, that employee ownership seems to accentuate petty acquisitiveness, and that workers as owners generally reproduce old hierarchic structures.[63]

The evidence appears to point overwhelmingly to two conclusions: that most workers prefer autonomy to power (two points to Crozier), and that not all the piety and wit of workplace reformers have been able to dent the inertia of the existing structure of authority. Of course, unlike political inclusion, which is now a matter of history, we do not know yet what sort of organizational behavior a widely functioning industrial democracy might produce.

THE AUTHORITY-CULTURE OF THE POOR: AN EXPLANATION-SKETCH

Workplace inclusion reinforces the need to give a reasonable account of two discontents with the results of political and educational inclusion, self-exclusion and the maintenance of stratification and hierarchy. In addition, we need to explain the apparent irrationality, even latent and overt violence (physicality), of mass behavior under conditions of inclusion (rather than as frustrated, or rational, responses to exclusion). And a "science of equality" should provide an account of the tendency of lower-class organizations to spawn institutions in which authority is an odd compound, on the one hand, of dominance and submissiveness and, on the other, of feudalistic mutualities between plebeian lords (bosses) and their followers.

A Proposed Explanation: Rationale and Summary

For all the usual reasons, single-factor explanations will not suffice. To avoid cumbersome theory, however, we should initially attempt to single out some factor likely to be critically important for explaining the gap between expectations from, and consequences of,

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civic inclusion. I want to suggest that the "authority-culture of poverty"—patterns of authority typical of the institutions of lower-class life—is that factor. Such patterns seem potentially crucial for three reasons.

First, since civic inclusion has to do with the reduction of asymmetries of power, influence, and authority in social organizations, it is important to examine general attitudes toward such asymmetries and behavior regarding them. Second, the fundamental sources of disillusion with the effects of political incorporation have always been the attitudes and behavior of the newly included. Priority, therefore, should be given to examining authority relations experienced in their social milieus; and we may posit that authority in institutions in which the lives of the lower social strata are most immersed need particularly close scrutiny. Finally, though societies no doubt have cultures that cut across class lines, we may also posit that objective conditions of life shared by social strata will underlie subcultural differences, as determinants or constraints. For the lower, less-advantaged strata, the most obviously shared objective condition is great scarcity. Thus, it seems reasonable to posit that there will exist everywhere essentially similar authority-cultures of poverty—a core of common attitudes toward processes of governance and relations of authority associated with low incomes, little instruction, and menial work.

My governing hypothesis, then, is that the effects of civic inclusion are largely explicable by the culture of authority of the lower strata, and by differences between lower-class culture and that of the higher strata. At the very outset, I want to make clear that the authority relations typical of lower-class life are not somehow irrational (as may seem to those who have never experienced poverty), but that they are adapted to the ineluctable facts of material hardship. I will support my hypothesis by discussing three institutions that pretty much cover the social life of the poor: the family, the institutions of "street society," and lower-class jobs. No more is needed, for a correlate of high material scarcity is a highly constricted social life in rudimentary social networks.[64]

Lower-Class Families

All of the unanticipated consequences of civic inclusion that I outlined above can be traced to traits of family life typical among the

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poor. The poorer the families, the more this holds, of course; but I am dealing here with the ordinary poor, not merely with the extreme poverty of destitute people.

With regard to *self-exclusion:* The authority exercised in lower-class families is utterly unlikely to breed participatory dispositions in family members, nor are family relations among the poor likely to produce the sense that one can be effective in influencing the powers that govern life. What they are likely to produce are passivity and lack of enterprise, ignorance, an inability to make reasoned choices, and a tendency to evade difficult situations.

Josephine Klein's synthesis of works on British subcultures[65]—based on many sociological case studies, popular works, social novels, and much else—depicts unrelentingly authoritarian, nonparticipatory dominance. Lower-class families generally are headed by monocratic fathers, though they are actually governed more by mothers. Fathers live mostly at work and with their pals in pubs; when home, they require peace and indulgence more than power, but can turn despotic, often at unpredictable moments. Regulation of the family tends to be exceedingly detailed and comprehensive; the intent seems to be to establish routines for just about all the children's activities. The routines, however, are frequently disrupted by peremptory orders, and punishments are quick to be invoked to enforce orders, either routine or impulsive. Husbands rarely "discuss" rules of conduct with their wives, but rather make specific demands on them. If "discussion" occurs at all, it generally takes the form of quarrels—struggles for domination or autonomy. One finds, in effect, no decision-making processes at all in lower-class families, and hence, no participation in any sensible meaning.

Regarding the submissive acceptance of *ruling elites:* If the most formative experiences of life are pervaded by the distinction between superiors and inferiors; if superiors are menacing, thus to be appeased; if they are deeply needed for nurture and protection in the very precarious world that poor children confront; then surely we should expect what Michels found—that authority figures tend to be both venerated and perceived as separated from subordinates—figures of some different, higher order. To those who live in such a world, there is no association between compliance and legitimacy. Compliance will tend to be mere submission, the acceptance of dominance as a given.

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As to *mass behavior:* I want especially to stress here an aspect of authority in lower-class family life that also helps explain self-exclusion and submissiveness to power; it is perhaps the most important facet of authority in lower-class families—the arbitrary nature of authority. Arbitrariness makes life unpredictable, and thus frightening. It breeds anxiety and a sense of helplessness. Good and awful things happen without apparent rhyme or reason, where all seems aimed, above all, at peace for the moment: orders, punishments, and also indulgences (like suddenly smothering babies with love, stuffing the kids with food). An atmosphere of unpredictable kicks and kisses is bound to breed not just passivity and submission but, when reaction is aroused, irritable distrust, unpredictable aggression, riotous impulse, a reactive pattern of ruleless (thus seemingly irrational) submission, and hitting back. In addition, how could discussion occur among people whose dominant mode of making decisions is quarreling, who are suspicious, easily slighted, easily aroused to aggression, and relatively free of internalized standards of propriety?

Even the operation of *organizations as gangs* can be traced, to an extent, to family patterns among the poor (though it has more to do with life "on the street"). Organized despoliation can be attributed to the relative lack of strongly internalized moral restraints toward others among the poor—which includes people to whom one is close. One takes what one can, suffers as one must, and is grateful for indulgences received—surely the essence of the attitudes that maintained political machines. Despoliation seems normal within the very circle of lower-class family life. Klein points out that husbands in the English lower classes generally try to cheat wives out of what they need to do the tasks demanded of them—even steal from them. Children, of course, also try to sneak material things: if, for instance, food is available, it is gobbled up beyond need. In these ways, the internal "market" of the lower-class family is a sort of microcosm of premodern, nonrational, ruleless capitalism.

All this may sound bigoted—like Le Bon on the crowd. Like much of the extensive literature on the culture of poverty, the conventional account of authority relations in poor milieus in fact tends to be invidious. It turns chiefly on the lack of education and "sophistication."[66] A more compelling explanation of the authority relations I have sketched is that family authority in poor families is of necessity

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determined by high material constraints and, to a large extent, adapted to that fact.[67]

Scarcity compels people to live in ways that, willy-nilly, entail authoritarian relationships and their consequences for personality development. Where affluence is greater, objective constraints on possible modes of behavior are looser; more liberal authority relations at least are possible. This argument also implies that cultural differences among the lower and higher classes in the same society may well be greater than differences among members of the same class in different societies. If so, it follows, then, that inclusion in a system of relationships constructed by affluent people may create greater problems of adaptation, a more acute sense of disorientation, than even so dramatic a change as immigration.

Higher-class writers who discuss the poor (like the philosophic radicals) often seem astonishingly insensitive to the simplest facts of life in the lower strata. The simplest fact of all, of course, is financial stringency and what goes with it. Where everyone has a room of his or her own, access to good, adequate modern plumbing, to telephones, to personal TV sets and hi-fi's, and a full refrigerator, it is no triumph of sophistication to be liberal in the family. Where food is scarce, where people rub elbows all the time, where someone must have the last word over who gets to use the TV or record-player—in other words, even in families a good deal above destitution—*permissiveness simply is not possible; domestic routines and strict* discipline are imperative. Because of that, sanctions must quickly be invoked when orders are breached. Since, moreover, the particular scarcities that need managing are highly unpredictable, the concrete command is more to the point than general norms that allow family members room for interpretation. Demanding and commanding, of course, also express aggressions that follow from frustrations, thus again from stringency; if life is poor, it can hardly fail to be brutish. The combination of stringency and strictness necessarily breeds dependence—an intensely felt need for protection—and a craving for indulgence.

If directives must be peremptory and unpredictable, if they must be backed by summary punishments, if, as a result, general norms are underdeveloped, then it follows that perceptions of legitimacy or illegitimacy also must be weak or wanting. Authority must shade off into power, pure and simple. The tendency for the two to coincide is

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reinforced by another unavoidable fact of lower-class life: since constant discipline is necessary, and since mothers are busy with all sorts of chores and often, necessarily, out of the home, much authority devolves on children over children; sometimes children nine or ten years old manage others. In young children of *any* class, restraints are inclined to be low and the moral sense little developed, but these tend to be much accentuated by poverty.

Further, how could that sine qua non of liberal authority, decision by discussion, make sense in conditions of stringency and deep insecurity? The better-off have options, and thus discussion occurs naturally. Among the poor, however, we are bound to find the attitude that talking is useless—simply because it usually is.

In these ways, and others, virtually all facets of authority relations in lower-class families can be deduced from the functional imperatives of living in poverty.[68]

Street Society

> *Sometimes I wonder why I even bothered to go to school. Practically everything I know I learned on the corner . . . . The street is where young bloods get their education.*
>
> —H. Rap Brown
> *Die Nigger Die*

Peer groups are important in all social strata, particularly for youths; they are far more important, however, in the lower strata than in any other. If homes are crowded, regimented, and depressed, those who can will gravitate toward the outside. As the home is something to be escaped, so too are schools for most lower-class youths, since schools do not provide a context with which these young people can identify. In lower-class schools, as we saw, the atmosphere also is oppressive. Teachers seem like alien figures, and the disappointed hopes of adult family members and acquaintances inhibit ambition. Most lower-class youths tend inevitably to become "street boys,"[69] and life on the street—with peers, but emulating adult (male) street society—is as important in molding attitudes, behavior, and personality as life in the family, perhaps more so. Street

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society includes not only street-corner life in the literal sense, but also the life that occurs in many kinds of sociable institutions—barber shops, drugstores, poolrooms, bowling alleys, arcades, clubrooms, cafeterias, taverns—always within very narrowly bounded "urban villages." The neighborhood streets and gathering places are the relevant worlds of the urban poor, and they often extend only for a few blocks. The rest is alien territory.

Life on the street best explains two facets of the syndrome of authority in lower-class contexts: elitism (and its counterpart, submission) and the tendency to generate gangs (literally or figuratively) as the typical form of organizations. Self-exclusion and aspects of mass behavior also are reinforced by the institutions of the street.

The mean streets provide rich materials for anthropological study, but unfortunately, good studies of them are few, and it is therefore difficult to make these points tellingly. In addition, most of what literature there is on street society deals with the life of the most lowly and is mainly concerned with its more sensational aspects: criminality and other social pathologies or—better—behavior perceived as pathological by middle-class observers.

Nevertheless, what we do have can be considered useful if two premises hold, as I think they do. First, the more grisly, more publicized aspects of life in lower-class neighborhoods are an integral part of routine existence. "If a racketeer commits murder," writes William F. Whyte, "that is news. If he proceeds quietly with the daily routines of his business, that is not news. If the politician is indicted for accepting graft, that is news. If he goes about doing the usual favors for his constituents, that is not news."[70] If the kind of life experienced in the lower social strata is the unavoidable consequence of living with high scarcity and in the confines of constricted social networks, then it must follow that the life of the *most* lowly is only an intensified version of that lived by the less so. And this seems to be true. For instance, we associate gangs with vice and mayhem, and not entirely without reason: a great deal of life on the street is rough and aggressive, as it must be. But gangs vary from being vicious to those that lead a rather innocent club-life, and a ruleful one—though the rules, as Foster puts it, "are not middle-class nor Marquis of Queensberry."[71]

Governance in street gangs and their equivalents (clubs, cliques, rat-packs) is exactly what the more disenchanted ruling-elite theorists

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would expect—dramatically so. Since such gangs are especially salient for the young (who, after all, do not yet work, or work much, at jobs or in school), their socialization outside the family also leads not only to dependence on leaders, but to "veneration" of them. Mills tells us that the power-elite rules by default, but if the masses were tuned in to them, it is doubtful that they would find anything either unfamiliar or illegitimate.

Authority in street gangs of all kinds is uniformly monocratic and rigidly hierarchical.

> The leader is the focal point for the organization of his group. In his absence . . . there is not common activity or general conversation. When the leader appears the situation changes strikingly. The small groups form into one large group. The conversation becomes general, and unified action frequently follows. . . . The members do not feel that the gang is really gathered until the leader appears . . . and when he is present they expect him to make their decisions.[72]

Frederick Thrasher's study of more than a thousand gangs in Chicago found such monocracy without exception.[73] The leaders do often use lieutenants, and indeed, "each member of the . . . gang has his own position in the gang structure."[74] A result, as in all monocracies, is the not infrequent overthrow of a leader by a lieutenant who sets up a gang of his own.

On what basis does such leadership rest, and on what basis may it be challenged? In a nutshell, it rests on what Foster calls physicality, and what Thrasher calls gameness—personal prowess, plus some closely related traits, like foxiness (in Machiavelli's sense), excellence in verbal meanness (insults and ridicule), or indeed, any kind of competitive excellence (for instance, in bowling). Authority and power—for that matter, brute force—are synonymous in lower-class gangs.[75] The gangs are warrior-societies.

Force and its near-relatives legitimate because they are highly functional in lower-class life, not irrational pathologies. This is so simply because lower-class street life is not far removed from the "state of nature," like it or not. The lower-class child's life, writes Keller, "is violent, hostile, aggressive, anxious and unstable. . . . He learns to fight for everything; he learns that might does indeed make right."[76] Claude Brown in *Manchild in the Promised Land* writes about Harlem:

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Fighting was the thing that people concentrated on. In our childhood we all had to make our reputations in the neighborhood. Then we'd spend the rest of our lives living up to them. . . . The little bosses in the neighborhood whom the adults respected were little boys who didn't let anybody mess with them. . . . If I had stayed in Harlem all my life, I might never have known that there was anything else in life other than sex, religion, and violence.[77]

How else—if not by prayer or aggression—can the poor "achieve" what others get in gentler ways? Foster calls violence "the lower-class problem-solving technique." Where other resources are very limited, that is hardly astonishing. And *who* is there to attack, in the small urban villages, but others like oneself?

Under such conditions, strength must be an overriding value; it provides protection in a physically menacing world. Authority in street gangs, then, rests on the same basis as lordship in early Western feudalism, for exactly the same reason. Whether one's locality is overrun by predatory Norsemen, Magyars, and Huns, or by Short Tails, Swamp Angels, and Buckoos, the ability to provide elementary physical security is bound to legitimate domination. Nonviolence, in such cases, is not "natural"; self-defense is. The gang leader, like the early feudal lord, also tends to act *in loco parentis,* protectively and with strict discipline.

We begin to see here why lower-class organizations tend to have what I called a quasi-feudal character—including the mutualities of support and protection that are the essence of political machines. There is in gangs a strong sense of mutual obligations: services are done for services rendered, favors for favors, among the "men" and between leaders and followers, in accordance with rigid, though tacit, codes.[78] Loyalty counts with gameness and stealth as a source of status on the street.

Moreover, strength, stealth, excellence in physical competitions, and primal loyalties that solidify groups as mutual-protection societies are bound to be major sources of self-esteem and esteem by others in the societies of the poor. From what else can status be derived? Clearly, not from occupations; perhaps—a rank or two removed from great economic stringency—from religiosity; almost universally from the ability to beat the system—which, if you are in it, can only be through successful hustling. "Because of the lack of successful middle-class adult models to emulate, . . . the black

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child's model for emulation becomes the hustler, the pimp, the murphy man, the preacher, the athlete (only recently)."[79] The life of hustling, needless to say, often is—must be—highly "sophisticated," but, of course, the sophistication of the streets is not that of the alumni associations. The hustler-hero certainly would not last long in the boardroom (or would he?), but neither (and more surely) would the board member do well on the street.

So far, I have emphasized the links between street life and elitism, but also touched on its links to "nonrational" behavior, to legitimacy, and to the predatory nature of many lower-class organizations. The link to the last of these traits needs some further discussion, since the inadequacies of the organizations of the lower classes as educative, mobilizing structures are critical to the discontent associated with inclusion.

There is a direct relation between the organizations of the street and the political organizations of the poor: the gangs and clubs of the streets long were the cells of political machines, and many of the top and secondary leaders of the machines were recruited straight from the street organizations. Religion, hustling, and politics have always and everywhere been close allies among the poor; all are vehicles for getting on in poor society, sometimes for getting out of it. Robert E. Park and his collaborators already described the interconnections between street gangs and political machines in their seminal study *The City*. Thrasher, in 1926, documented the point at length.[80] Foster traces the virtual amalgamation of gangs and political machines precisely to the early age of political inclusion in the United States:

> Gangs started out as petty thieves who also fought for their neighborhoods for the fun of fighting. Gradually, however, some of them became very much involved as . . . tools of politicians. In the early days before the Civil War, the composition and objectives of the gangs began to change. In the 1830s district and ward leaders began to purchase saloons, dance houses, and the greengrocery speakeasies in which the gangs congregated, while taking houses of prostitution and gambling under their protective wings. Hence we had the beginning of the amalgamation of the underworld of the gangs with the politicians.[81]

This amalgamation of gangs and machines makes the operation of the machines comprehensible, as it does their astonishing accept-

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ability to the lower strata. What possible concern could members of these strata have had for any "general interest," of the sort about which bookish liberals had written? How could such a concept as the "common interest" have been grasped where the natural leaders, the more gifted and more "sophisticated," had principally to mediate between the neighborhood and the big shots? The machines made sense—functional sense. They were predatory, as life in the lower strata was, and had to be. They worked through the familiar system of clientelism: favors for favors. They were run monocratically by bosses, with paramilitary discipline. The bosses, quite "naturally" for political entrepreneurs, tried to amass support cheaply. They did so by giving small "pay" to people who worked for them and by charging fees for favors (getting jobs, fixing cases, and the like), through bagmen and other graft-collectors. The chief point was to achieve, as much as possible, a comfortable independence from the machine itself. In return, the machine was expected to get things for the community—and getting things for the neighborhoods was not looked on as somehow shady but as a matter of fundamental rights. The essentially feudal idea of mutual obligations bound members of the political machines to the bosses, and the machines to their political clients. And much of this—spoils, patronage, fixing things for support, getting things for the constituency—remains an essential part of the practical morality of inclusive democracy.

By far the best description of all this is Whyte's—for Boston in the early 1940s, a century after the initial weddings of machines and gangs. Whyte, in fact, entitled the entire general discussion of *Street Corner Society* (after presenting case studies of two gangs, Doc's and Chick's) "Racketeers and Politicians." He also provides a splendid account of how recruitment from gangs into political organizations occurs. For the gang leader, like Doc and Chick in Boston, what was there to do when the gangs disintegrated as the boys married and settled into jobs? They had brains and status, and they were accustomed to leadership. Were they to take on menial work? Obviously not. But what else was there, except politics? So Doc and Chick, quite naturally, switched from running gangs to political activity—the one, from unsuccessful candidacy for office into the oblivion "in the back of Stefan's dimly lighted barbershop"; the other, to the attorney general's staff, by way of his own small

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organization to distribute handbills, canvass, and speak at meetings.[82]

Lower-Class Work

It goes without saying that the conventional organization of lower-class (unskilled, semiskilled) workplaces will only reinforce the tendencies I have described; hence the contemporary preoccupations with the "humanization" of the workplace, with QWL arrangements, and with workers' participation in management. A less simple issue involves the effects that the intrinsic nature of lower-class work has on personality traits and, through them, on dispositions with regard to politics—an issue that has, in fact, been studied a fair amount.[83]

The leading contemporary research, both clinical and statistical, on the subject is that of Melvin Kohn and his associates.[84] The essence of Kohn's argument can be put thus: lower-class jobs predominantly inhibit "self-direction." They are closely supervised and, in other ways, highly disciplined. The basic cause of this is their very nature, especially their extreme simplicity. Complex, nonroutine work requires decisions among options; simple work verges on robotics. There are some exceptions. Some blue-collar jobs do require special skills or, for special reasons, cannot be supervised closely—most of all the jobs of expert dirty workers, like miners and truckdrivers; for that reason, such jobs are much prized, despite the arduous, often dangerous work involved. (In fact, danger and arduousness in work generally are treated as badges of honor in the working class.) By and large, however, lower-class jobs are hardly likely to induce participation or make people capable of performing well in decision-structures. In simple, menial jobs, the only thing likely to be learned is that one submits or tyrannizes.

In addition, simple, menial work has important psychological consequences that are bound to affect the authority-culture of the lower strata. Such work, for instance, contributes significantly to how morality is conceived. To menial workers, acting "morally" tends only to mean strict adherence to dictates, as against basing behavior on internalized norms or standards consciously devised by oneself. The relationship of this to domination and submission, as well as to "mass" and exploitative behavior, is obvious. Menial work tends to breed, according to Kohn's findings, a sort of blind authoritarian conservatism of the Archie Bunker type; for example: "The most

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important thing to teach children is absolute obedience to their parents"; "Children shouldn't be confused by reading books"; "Questioning the old ways just causes trouble."[85] Such attitudes can readily be traced to settings in which dictates and dull routines predominate.

Kohn's implicit prescription for remedying the flaws of inclusion is to change work itself, not its organization—especially to "complicate" it, free it of simple, option-free routines—to make of it artisanship in industrial clothes. How and whether this is possible remains to be seen. As things are, lower-class work tends to engender what is surely the ultimate self-exclusion: the dissociation of the self from its activities—alienation. Pateman's visions of the educative value of participation in the direction of the workplace will surely be dashed most of all by that dissociation.

The literature on lower-class work uniformly points to such dissociation: dissatisfaction with jobs, lack of commitment to them, and lack of identification with the workplace. Among the young, this is reflected especially in a tendency to drift from job to job, looking for something rarely (or never) found. By the age of twenty-five, the working-class youths studied by Lillian Rubin had worked, on the average, almost eight years, and half had held from six to ten jobs.[86] As it becomes necessary to settle down, and as hope for something better evaporates, such extreme mobility declines (though layoffs and temporary work still make for a good deal of movement from job to job). Yet, even when settled, the lower-class worker tends to resign and numb himself to his work, to treat the job as something to be got through, much as he "got through" school. This might be considered a definition of menial work, or "labor," in Arendt's sense: work that demeans, that offers no psychic rewards.

The work of most lower-class men thus only reinforces all that follows from constraints in domestic life and their consequences for authority. It does so directly, and also indirectly, by bringing into the home men who need indulgence because they are fatigued and distressed, who oppress because they have been oppressed, who discourage enterprise in children because they have had to learn to numb themselves as a condition of survival.

As for the work of the chief executives—the women—the domestic tasks of lower-class housewives are so deadening and demanding that the women often seek relief in outside drudgery, in "low-status,

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low-paying, dead-end work made up of dull, routine tasks; work that often is considered too menial for men": being a cleaning-woman, seamstress, waitress, cashier, school-crossing guard, and the like. Worse, women generally seem to *prefer* work that involves service, submission, and suppression of the intellect. And they tend, generally, to enjoy doing such work "because it gets . . . [them] away from home."[87]

* * *

I have noted that the descriptions of the effects of civic inclusion in an earlier part of this essay are highly simplified and that the explanation in the section on the authority-culture of the poor is an "explanation-sketch," to be filled in by a great deal of further research. For once, the point is not to disarm criticism with modesty; it is, rather, that if we really want to take civic inclusion seriously—as a value or as a fundamental fact of social life, or both—we must undertake further research on a proper scale, and treat the explanation sketched as plausible enough to attempt proper testing.

Pertinent research can proceed along a great many lines, only a few of which I want to outline here.[88] We need, for instance, to do good comparative research on authority relations among ethnically different groups such as Irish, blacks, Chicanos, Italians, Orientals. Such research can provide a tough test of what I have argued, because, as stated, my thesis has an inescapable corollary: if high material constraint severely limits options in social behavior and attitudes, then, despite ethnic differences, authority relations among the poor should be much the same—all the more so if such attitudes and behavior are adaptive imperatives in stressful conditions. It would similarly be useful to compare the organizations of the poor historically, by region, cross-nationally, and in rural and urban settings. Comparisons might also be made between Northern American political machines and Southern populist movements. We need many more pertinent studies of inclusive schools (and universities), not least in countries other than America and Britain—in countries, for instance, where poverty and affluence involve lesser differentials. It would obviously be useful to study the governance of trade unions, past and present, more widely and from the standpoint of my thesis,

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and to compare such governance by the type of work performed by the membership. The list could be much expanded.

Assuming for now that the explanation-sketch I have proposed holds up as it is filled out, what implications follow? Two above all. The first is that civic inclusion does change social institutions, but that it often changes only their "content," not their "form" (e.g., not elitism but the composition of elites); still more intriguing, that it generates neo-feudal relations in advanced societies; and not least, that it changes the meaning of dispositions to act (thus action-systems) that we consider identical: for instance, "rationality" from public discussion to define common interests, to entrepreneurial value-maximization, to functional adaptation to exigent conditions. The second major implication (which has much relevance for policy) is that our conventional conception of the relation between inclusion and equalization is the wrong way round. Inclusion does not much make groups equal; rather, substantial equalization of the conditions of life seems to be the prerequisite for inclusion to work as intended. Schools, for instance, do not appear to be effective routes out of the ghettos and barrios; rather, improving the lot of ghetto people seems necessary to make them want to use schools for achievement.

Finally, I want to stress that the value-bias of this paper intentionally is that of Schumpeter's *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy.* Like many other scholars of his generation and origins, Schumpeter tried to face up to the facts of malfunctioning democracies, the rise of Nazism, the "dream that failed." To do so, he said unwelcome things about what democracy can and cannot be. He said them for, so to speak, prophylactic reasons, so that a valuable, however imperfect, kind of polity would not be destroyed by false illusions. Critics of his work charged—and stung—him with the allegation of "defeatism" (and worse). Schumpeter replied:

> Facts in themselves and inferences from them can never be defeatist. . . . The report that a given ship is sinking is not defeatist. Only the spirit in which this report is received can be defeatist: the crew can sit down and drink, but it can also rush to the pumps. If the men merely deny the report, though it be carefully substantiated, then they are escapists. . . . Frank presentation of ominous facts was never more necessary than it is today because we seem to have developed escapism into a system of thought.[89]

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If we really want to construct a "science of equality," we need, more than anything, to act upon that querulous and wise caution.

ENDNOTES

This essay owes a great deal to members of the Research Program in Authority Studies, University of California, Irvine. The program has been generously supported by UCI, as one of its Focused Research Programs (FRPs), pilot programs in collaborative, interdisciplinary research. I am grateful for this support. The ideas sketched in this essay are both a conclusion and a beginning. They evolved out of the program's earlier researches into authority relations; they are a platform for what I hope will be continuing, collaborative, more intensive studies.

[1]Charles Tilly, *From Mobilization to Revolution* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1978), p. 52.

[2]I have discussed what should be meant by a "developmental" process in "The Idea of Political Development: From Dignity to Efficiency," *World Politics* (July 1982): 451-86.

[3]Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (London: Oxford University Press, 1947), pp. 3-18.

[4]Ibid., p. 18.

[5]What follows is a severe condensation of an earlier essay, "Civic Inclusion: The Political Aspect," *Working Papers on Authority Relations,* no. 3, February 1983 (issued by the Program in Authority Studies, University of California, Irvine).

[6]Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1943), pp. 250-51.

[7]See especially Samuel H. Beer, *British Politics in the Collectivist Age* (New York: Knopf, 1965), pp. 22-32, and the sources cited there.

[8]For an excellent overview of utilitarian thought, see William L. Davidson, *Political Thought in England: The Utilitarians from Bentham to J.S. Mill* (London: Butterworth, 1915). J.S. Mill's views on the educative effects of citizenship as such are particularly well summarized in Carole Pateman, *Participation and Democratic Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp. 28-35.

[9]This bears out the sapient Bagehot's argument that the effects of large political changes could be seen clearly only a generation after their occurrence. Bagehot did have considerable reservations about what was expected from the Reform Act of 1867, but discerning and putting down nonsense was his style—and his doubts were based more on the shortcomings of the old oligarchy than the new citizens. See his Preface to the second edition of *The English Constitution* (London: Oxford University Press, 1978), pp. 259-312.

[10]Graham Wallas, *Human Nature in Politics* (London: Constable and Company, 1908), pp. 199-200.

[11]Gustave Le Bon, *The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind* (New York: Viking, 1960).

[12]S.E. Finer, "Introduction" to Vilfredo Pareto, *Sociological Writings* (London: Pall Mall Press, 1966), pp. 5-8.

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[13]For summaries of the early literature on ruling elites, see T.B. Bottomore, *Elites and Society* (London: Watts, 1964), Renzo Sereno, *The Rulers* (New York: Praeger, 1962), and James Burnham, *The Machiavellians* (London: Putnam, 1943).

[14]J.L. Talmon, *The Origins of Totalitarian Democracy* (New York: Praeger, 1960).

[15]An exception is the work on political participation of Sidney Verba, Norman H. Nie, and Jae-On Kim; see their *Participation and Political Equality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978).

[16]Wallas, *Human Nature in Politics,* pp. 231-33.

[17]J.E.C. Bodley, *France* (London: Macmillan, revised edition, 1899), pp. 25, 34.

[18]Robert Michels, *Political Parties* (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1949), esp. pp. 54-65.

[19]See Tocqueville, *Democracy in America,* chapter 25, and J.S. Mill, *Utilitarianism, Liberty, and Representative Government* (London: J.S. Dent and Sons, 1910), pp. 278-88.

[20]Le Bon, *The Crowd;* Michels, *Political Parties;* pp. 28, 69-74; Max Weber, "Politics as a Vocation," in *Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), pp. 101-15.

[21]The seminal depiction of the nature and ends of political machines is in James Bryce, *The American Commonwealth* (London: Macmillan, 1891), vol. 2. For a good bibliography of the now vast literature on political machines, see Thomas M. Guterbuck, *Machine Politics in Transition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), pp. 307-14.

[22]Weber, *Essays on Sociology,* p. 86.

[23]Bryce, *The American Commonwealth,* p. 105.

[24]Bibliographies of more than a hundred major works have become common in overviews of the subject of participation. See, for instance, Lester W. Millbrath, "Political Participation," in *The Handbook of Political Behavior,* edited by Samuel L. Long (New York: Plenum Press, 1981), vol. 4, chapter 4. This is typical; the modern literature on the other subjects in fact is larger.

[25]C. Wright Mills, *The Power Elite* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956), passim.

[26]Robert A. Dahl, *Who Governs?* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961).

[27]The standard synthesis of the theory remains William Kornhauser's *The Politics of Mass Society* (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1959). Kornhauser's work also began to shape the concept of mass society for systematic political sociology, rather than angry polemics or fuzzy "philosophy."

[28]Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy,* p. 285.

[29]I refer to Anthony Downs's *Economic Theory of Democracy* (New York: Harper and Row, 1957) and William Riker's *The Theory of Political Coalitions* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962).

[30]See Michael Laver, *The Politics of Private Desires* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1981), an excellent introductory summary of the modern theory of "rational choice" in politics.

[31]The subject of "educational inclusion"—its nature, the processes involved, the expectations associated with it, and the discontents associated with the expectations—is very large. We have literature about it since the eighteenth century. That literature burgeoned in, and since, the 1960s, when stock began widely to be taken of the results of advanced inclusion in educational institutions. Here, I only make summary points, especially pertinent to the theoretical issue of the paper.

[32]See *Education and Democracy,* edited by A.E. Dyson and Julian Lovelock (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975), pp. 9-10. Dyson and Lovelock's book

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presents a splendid combination of writings and speeches, popular and philosophical, on the relations between education and democracy, from 1791 to 1916—from Tom Paine to John Dewey.

[33]James Mill, "Education," in *The Encyclopedia Britannica,* 1815.

[34]A good summary of that agitation is in Lawrence A. Cremin, *The Transformation of the School* (New York: Vintage Books, 1964), chapter 1.

[35]Ibid., p. 10.

[36]Ibid., p. 13.

[37]Charles E. Silberman, *Crisis in the Classroom: The Remaking of American Education* (New York: Vintage Books, 1970), pp. 15, 17.

[38]Martin Trow, "Reflections on the Transition from Mass to Universal Higher Education," *Daedalus* 99 (1) (Winter 1970).

[39]Cremin, *The Transformation of the School,* p. 16.

[40]See extract in Dyson and Lovelock, *Education and Democracy,* pp. 279-81.

[41]Joseph Mayer Rice, *The Public-School System of the United States* (New York: 1893).

[42]A useful synthesis of pertinent studies is in Richard M. Merelman, "Democratic Politics and the Culture of American Education," *American Political Science Review* 74 (2) (June 1980): 319-32.

[43]Ibid., p. 320. See also Philip Jackson, *Life in Classrooms* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1968) and *Power and Ideology in Education,* edited by J. Karabel and A.H. Halsey (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977).

[44]See, for instance, Philip Cusick, *Inside High School* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1973).

[45]Mary Haywood Metz, *Classrooms and Corridors: The Crisis of Authority in Desegregated Secondary Schools* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978).

[46]Merelman, "Democratic Politics," pp. 326-29.

[47]See, for instance, John Wakeford, *The Cloistered Elite* (New York: Praeger, 1969), pp. 128-59.

[48]Metz, *Classrooms and Corridors,* pp. 71, 81, 82-83, 73-80.

[49]Ibid., chapters 3-6.

[50]Ibid., pp. 61-62.

[51]For Metz's characterization of these styles, see ibid., pp. 35-39.

[52]Merelman, "Democratic Politics," pp. 326-30.

[53]See, for instance, the excellent readings in *Family, Class and Education,* edited by Maurice Craft (London: Longman, 1970); D.H. Hargreaves, *Social Relations in a Secondary School* (London: Macmillan, 1967) and (with others) *Deviance in Classrooms* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975); and, especially apropos to my subject, Peter Woods, *The Divided School* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979).

[54]The above is a distillation of three sections in Woods, *The Divided School,* pp. 38-51 (on parental influence over pupils), 63-83, and 102-20 (on pupils' adaptation to the schools). Woods's findings are derived from a case study in a particular culture, but his findings typify those of comparable studies.

[55]Ibid., pp. 140-69.

[56]Ibid., pp. 25-62.

[57]See Howard S. Becker, *Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance* (New York: Free Press, 1963) and Hargreaves, *Deviance in Classrooms.*

[58]Herbert L. Foster, *Ribbin', Jivin', and Playin' the Dozens* (Cambridge, Mass: Ballinger, 1974)—a book I cannot recommend too highly—p. 25.

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[59]Carole Pateman, *Participation and Democratic Theory* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1970), especially chapter 3. Pateman correctly cites the Guild Socialists, especially G.D.H. Cole, as the aboriginal sources of her argument.

[60]For useful syntheses and references, see *Towards Industrial Democracy: Europe, Japan, and the United States*, edited by Benjamin C. Roberts (Montclair, N.J.: Allanheld, Osmun, 1979); Daniel Zwerdling, *Workplace Democracy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1980); R. Edwards, *Contested Terrain: The Transformation of the Workplace in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Basic Books, 1979); and John F. Witte, *Democracy, Authority, and Alienation in Work* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1982).

[61]For evidence, see an article that claims to *support* Patemen: J. Maxwell Elden, "Political Efficacy at Work," *American Political Science Review* vol. 75 (1981): 43-58, especially the summary table on pp. 50, 55.

[62]See, for example, Witte, *Democracy, Authority, and Alienation in Work*, pp. 13-15.

[63]See, for instance, Edward S. Greenberg, "Industrial Self-Management and Political Attitudes," *American Political Science Review* 75 (1981): 29-42.

[64]Numerous British sociologists have found that for the unskilled (Stacey's term is "roughs") only the family and street society provide significant social networks beyond the job. A rung higher ("ordinary" people), the church also matters. Among the skilled ("respectable" people), so do trade unions. See Josephine Klein, *Samples from English Cultures* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1965), p. 53ff. Also, Mary Paneth, *Branch Street* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1944); M. Kerr, *The People of Ship Street* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1958); and N. Dennis et al., *Coal Is Our Life* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1956).

[65]Ibid.

[66]See, for example, Lipset's summary of the literature on "working-class authoritarianism." Seymour Martin Lipset, *Political Man* (New York: Doubleday, 1960), p. 120. For a summary and critique of the literature on the culture of poverty, see Charles A. Valentine, *Culture and Poverty* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968).

[67]If I read Valentine (previous note) correctly, it is precisely this fact of structural determinism and adaptation that he misses in works on the culture of poverty. See pp. 130-40.

[68]The expression comes from the most influential book on street society, William F. Whyte, *Street Corner Society* (Chicago: University Chicago Press, 1943), p. xviii.

[69]Ibid.

[70]Ibid., p. xvi.

[71]Foster, *Ribbin', Jivin', and Playin' the Dozens,* p. 25.

[72]Whyte, *Street Corner Society,* p. 258.

[73]Frederic Thrasher, *The Gang: A Study of 1,313 Gangs in Chicago* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1926).

[74]Whyte, *Street Corner Society,* p. 262.

[75]Ibid., p. 1 & fn.; Thrasher, *The Gang,* p. 51, 106 fn., 239 fn.; Foster, *Ribbin', Jivin', and Playin' the Dozens,* p. 102 fn.

[76]Cited in Foster (above), p. 104.

[77]Claude Brown, *Manchild in the Promised Land* (New York: Macmillan, 1965).

[78]Whyte, *Street Corner Society,* p. 256.

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[79]Foster, *Ribbin', Jivin', and Playin' the Dozens,* p. 78.
[80]Thrasher, *The Gang,* pp. 313-36.
[81]Foster, *Ribbin', Jivin', and Playin' the Dozens,* p. 78.
[82]Whyte, *Street Corner Society,* pp. 35-41, 86-93.
[83]A good select bibliography on the subject may be found in Carmi Schooler and Melvin Kohn, "Occupational Experience and Psychological Functioning," *American Sociological Review* 38 (February 1973); 97-118. Along with that article, the following are particularly valuable: Melvin Kohn, *Class and Conformity* (Homewood, Ill.:, 1977) and "Job Conditions and Personality," *American Journal of Sociology* 87 (May 1982); 1257-86; Lillian Rubin, *Worlds of Pain* (New York: Basic Books, 1976), pp. 155-85; Robert Blauner, *Alienation and Freedom* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964); F. Zweig, *Men in the Pits* (London: Gollancz, 1948); Klein, *Samples from English Cultures,* and Dennis et al., *Coal Is Our Life.*
[84]Kohn, *Class and Conformity.*
[85]Schooler and Kohn, "Occupational Experience," p. 101.
[86]Rubin, *Worlds of Pain,* p. 155.
[87]Ibid., p. 166 fn.
[88]A more comprehensive list of such researches has been worked out by members of the Program in Authority Studies, University of California, Irvine. It is available in a document entitled "An Agenda for Research on Civic Inclusion and the Authority-Culture of Poverty." May 1983.
[89]Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy,* p. xi.

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Walter Dean Burnham

A Commentary on Harry Eckstein

"THE MASSES ARE REVOLTING." Once the active preoccupation of conservatives worried about the maintenance of civilization as we know it, the "revolting" quality of the masses seemed only too evident from the French Revolution to the Russian and beyond. Today, the term predominantly acquires its other but no less pejorative meaning: the masses and their cultural values prompt feelings of disgust among persons of taste and sensibility. We worry far less today about the active meaning of the term, since that kind of revolting seems quite out of the question, at least in the metropole countries of the world economy.

Professor Eckstein has done us the favor of spelling out this theme and its implications for "civic inclusion" generally, and the educational system in particular. His essay also—and quite rightly—provides the intellectual history of these preoccupations among men of taste, culture, and what the Germans call, rather untranslatably, *Bildung*. Worry about the masses and their culture as a general *western* intellectual issue is precisely coeval with the historic transition around 1900 from openly neofeudal or oligarchic forms of rule to those grounded in parliamentary democracy and mass political participation. It was in that era that Le Bon, Schumpeter, Ortega, and Wallas had their intellectual and social formation, while in the United States, at the same time, the alarm about the great beast below was sounded by the brothers Henry and Brooks Adams, and by many others as well.

At one level, this literature has always prompted a certain skeptical guffaw on my part. From the viewpoint of serious analysis, a good

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deal of it seems little more than the plaintive refrain of the white, middle-class homeowner faced with a black family moving on to the block: "Well, there goes the neighborhood!" This may perhaps be less a matter of deficiencies in identifying displeasing symptoms than of providing what strikes me as completely misleading statements of cause and effect: though even the symptomatic descriptions typically paint with far too broad a brush. But these writers—often despite themselves—were also on to something of importance, and we should candidly deal with that too.

The moment when the shock of recognition struck certain intellectuals is now over; the underlying issues are still very much with us. The symptoms are given us as a kind of catalogue. The lower classes have few or no intellectual interests. Their culture tends to be low—they would rather listen to rock or country music than go to a symphony concert. Their young attend school because the law gives them no choice. They live for today or, at best, for the day after tomorrow. They are authoritarian, and the modal forms of social organization for their young is essentially the same as it was for the Mongol horde or the early Slavic tribal *druzhina.* In a world of explosive violence, the leader of the gang is the young man who is best able to provide protection to its members against deadly force. All this is simply reinforced, if not directly caused, by the existence of arbitrary, erratic, and unpredictable authority within the family (assuming that there is a family at all, of course). As psychoanalysts will tell us, authority patterns of that kind, within the initial and most important element of socialization of the young, have all sorts of disruptive consequences for personality. Violent, authoritarian personalities who lack any frame of reference for any sustained, planned effort are regularly produced by such family milieus. They are incapable of taking charge of their lives; instead, things just happen to them.

The political, cultural, and educational effects of these "iron facts" are readily if oversimply described. Mass politics is essentially the politics of a magic show. Once, this politics was channeled through the political machine, a creation which reached its apogee of perfection at about the time that another mass theorist, Moisei Ostrogorski, first comprehensively described and attacked it in his book *Democracy and the Organization of Political Parties,* 1902. Here, payoffs were concrete and, very often, crass. Political reform, as always, was

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a middle-class luxury. Today politics is channeled through the mass media, itself a potent and revealing form of mass education. Perhaps few of us who study these matters would say that the change has necessarily been for the better.

The educational implications and consequences are anything but the hopes and dreams of John Dewey and other well-meaning liberals. Standing squarely in the way of the realization of any such aspirations lies the refractory mass of working-class culture. In this culture, there is next to no interest in learning—except perhaps, and then only marginally, when tangible, concrete economic rewards are clearly and more or less immediately present. If schools are, from the students' point of view, essentially detention centers, then their staffs' primary functions must be custodial rather than educative. Indeed, educators long ago recognized the existence of fundamental differences between middle-class children and the rest, and established explicit "tracking" systems to cope with them. Many of us can well remember the academic, commercial, and vocational tracks from our own high-school days. White Anglo-Saxon Protestants from middle-class families heavily populated the first; lower-middle and upper-lower-class children (frequently of Irish or native-white origin), the second; and working-class students (very often Polish, Italian, or black) clustered in the bottom track. And of course the *real* elite, at least in the Northeast, had its own "super-track": it sent its children to the usual expensive private schools, such as Exeter, Andover, and St. Paul's.

Public-school educators had originally created the tracking system because by so doing they were performing a crucial part of their primary task: to help in the reproduction of the American class structure. They had recognized that, inevitably, custodial and educative emphases crowd each other out. Following a kind of Gresham's law, this invariably was to the detriment of education, and thus to the detriment of high-aspiration middle-class parents who were concerned that their offspring get into college. As is common knowledge, the "quality of schools" is one of the important ingredients in residential choice, and thus in the economic-racial homogenization found within all American metropolitan areas. In the Boston area, with its many smallish towns and cities, schools in communities like Revere or Somerville have very different functions, cultures, and ambiences from their counterparts in towns like Weston or

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Brookline. The preferential flow of residential settlement among people with some economic choice works perhaps crudely, but on the whole very effectively, to achieve geographical tracking.

Needless to say, there is no seriously organized pressure to eliminate the "St. Grottlesex" private schools in the name of democratic equality. Nor, in the wake of recent Supreme Court decisions, is there any effective mechanism for achieving mandatory racial integration across the "Berlin walls" separating central cities from suburbs. Matters have, of course, been very different within the public high schools over recent decades. Tracking has fallen into bad odor because it obviously has racial overtones: black students have tended to become concentrated in the bottom track(s). To the extent that tracking within schools is abolished, and the schools themselves have heavily mixed pools of students along racial, ethnic, and especially class lines, the density and salience of educative activity will decline. Those with the economic resources to do so will get out of the area, and move to suburbs where the modal balance is much closer to the educative than to the custodial routines of the school. Ultimately, the success of such strategies is achieved because, in a dominantly liberal-capitalist political culture, class prejudice and class avoidance enjoys a protection long denied to racism, sexism, or other foci of discrimination.

All of this may be displeasing in the extreme to good democrats and liberals. But one really cannot deny the empirical reality of the phenomena that Professor Eckstein lays out for us, at least in the America of the here and now. Nor is it easy honestly to assign blame to those who, perceiving this reality, prefer their own and their childrens' interest, arranging their residential and educational budgets accordingly, to some ill-defined "public interest." After all, in a society profoundly informed at all levels by the theory and practice of competitive individualism, any public good is likely to be produced *only* to the extent that major private goods are generated at the same time and along the same lines. For in such a society, the lesson is taught over and over again that somehow, one is one's own best friend. In such a context, as the whole profile and program of the Reagan administration most recently remind us, the public good and the public household remain eternally—and *uniquely*—problematic. And as for the lower orders of that society: Well, it has gone out of fashion to say out loud with Alexander Hamilton, "Your people, Sir,

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is a great beast"; or to chant too publicly the old refrain, "The masses, what asses, prolific and unwashed." But such things, these days, no longer need to be said in public.

II

We can say three things about the modern American social structure, all of them integrally linked to its sitting within a late-capitalist political economy. In the first place, it is markedly inegalitarian along lines of social class, i.e., relative proximity of individuals, families, and larger groups to ownership of the means of production. Second, Americans, as children of Louis Hartz's "liberal tradition of America," subscribe to a single set of master assumptions and values that are *uniquely* supportive—and *uniquely* uncritical—of this capitalist political economy. This is a situation that, in terms of Antonio Gramsci's cultural analysis, is one of *uncontested hegemony*. As Gramsci, Hartz, and many others have pointed out, such a situation is without parallel in the collective experiences of other advanced-capitalist societies. If Americans think at all about economy, society, and politics—i.e., their collective existence—they tend to think in Lockean-liberal categories, for no other legitimate categories of thought exist. This has important implications for the American lower class. As the political scientist Robert Lane observed more than twenty years ago, the working-class men he interviewed displayed a notable lack of a sense of collective identity, and of any kind of extended-time dimension in their thinking. Lane suggested a close link between these characteristics and the national political culture. They appear to be *effects* of the cultural reproduction that arises from such conditions of uncontested hegemony.

The third major attribute of American society—here sharing much in common with other advanced-capitalist societies—is more recent and equally pervasive. This is the postwar achievement of broad if relative mass affluence based on very high levels of mass consumption of the economy's products. In retrospect, we may come to see this remarkable post-1945 development as part of a whole series of fundamental changes finally dissolving our bonds with an increasingly remote and irrelevant past—the "technetronic" future of superorganization and super-control about which Zbigniew Brzezinski and others have written. Be that as it may, the effect is to

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create a society profoundly molded by the persistent sales effort of its advertising industry. This sales effort is made vastly more effective and all-encompassing by the technological opportunities given it by the electronic media. This has served to keep the wheels of industry and commerce turning and, at least until very recently, to keep the old wolf of under-consumption at bay. But it has also produced a mass hedonism which has recently called forth alarmed attention not only from old-fashioned conservatives like Robert Nisbet, but from self-described social democrats like Daniel Bell. The "cultural contradictions" of capitalism to which Bell refers, faithfully reflect an underlying economic contradiction of late capitalism in its high mass-consumption phase. How does one square hedonism with self-sacrifice and renunciation of instant, instinctual gratification? This question finds its counterpart at a deeper economic level: how do we square the need for greatly increased levels of capital accumulation with the need for enough consumption to preserve social harmony and prevent a recurrence of depression?

Well, what does all this have to do with the lower classes and their culture? Quite a bit, it seems to me—as it has to do as well with the middle classes and *their* culture. The underlying reality for lower classes in a highly (and increasingly) inegalitarian political economy is that of *economic scarcity:* grinding, demoralizing, day-in-and-day-out economic scarcity. Associated with this scarcity is permanent *personal* (often physical) *insecurity.* As Lane and many others have pointed out, the socially functional response in such a case is the learning of routines which permit one to "get by." If—as was sometimes the case in class-rigid Europe nearly a century ago—the scarcity comes to be perceived as the result of class imposition, remarkably different social and political consequences from these may arise. For example, where serious education is denied to working classes, socialist entrepreneurs may well be able, through organizing reading rooms, night courses and the like, to stimulate and then partially fill a demand for it. Some rather specialized American-immigrant groups, notably Jewish immigrants, also followed a somewhat similar course despite their dominantly lower-class condition.

But the general American problem in today's world has some important links to a distinction made by Marx and not by the turn-of-the-century elitists: that between a *Lumpenproletariat* and

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the real thing (for this older generation of elitists, the demos *as a whole* was *lumpen*). Like much else in Marx, there is an emotional charge in such terms which may distract from the recognition that there may be analytic merit in the distinction. For Marx, of course, the distinction rested largely, though not entirely, between people living in sufficiently ordered lower-class social environments to be capable of organization behind a socialist alternative and those who, like the characters in the Brecht-Weill musical drama *The Threepenny Opera,* were not. More recent analysis, while eschewing the emotional load contained in the word *lumpen,* has reinforced the point that there is very great diversity—both across time and across space—in working-class social environments. The largest fault line, surely, is that between relatively coherent social milieus (particularly with the integrity of family structure more or less robustly preserved), and socially atomized, disintegrated milieus where individual psychopathologies are likely to be concentrated. Whether politically or intellectually ill-conceived or not, the controversial Moynihan report of some years ago attempted directly to address this problem so far as the black lower-class family was concerned. But as we all know, the problem extends far beyond those racial boundaries. Few thinking persons would doubt that growing up in a milieu saturated with atomization and social pathology is a poor preparation for success in later life, no matter on what basis one defines the term success.

There seem to me to be two points to make in considering these issues. The first of them is that stable working-class milieus may differ remarkably little from those classes above (especially immediately above) them. We certainly would find trouble defending the proposition that the lower-middle or even core-middle class in the United States is noted for its devotion to high culture or to learning for its own sake. And the more spectacular primitive *druzhina* gang life to which Professor Eckstein refers is conspicuously concentrated among the youth of *lumpen,* disorganized, lower-class environments; as he says, arising not only from economic scarcity but above all from the absence of even minimal levels of physical security.

The second point was long ago addressed by the Swedish sociologist Gunnar Myrdal in the form of a question: Why, he wondered, does the social infrastructure of the United States have such a comparatively huge element of the disorganized and atomized in its

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makeup? Why is it demonstrably physically safer to walk the docks of Marseilles or Tokyo at two in the morning than to walk through many an American urban park at high noon? Why, in short, is the *lumpen* component so much greater here than in other countries, even those which—like Canada—are also settler societies rather than nation states? If we seek for the political-murder capitals of the world, places like Belfast or Beirut come instantly to mind, for their communal strife is a permanently engraved law of social life. But if we seek the nonpolitical murder capitals of the world, we go to places like Detroit or Miami (or most other major American cities). Why is this?

Countless gallons of ink have been spilled on this subject by academic social scientists since the ghetto riots of the 1960s opened the research-grant taps. The answer, it seems to me, is ultimately—and at the most abstract level—that *this is the price we pay for uncontested hegemony.* It is the dark partner of the individualist, competitive liberalism of the American political tradition, inescapably and perhaps eternally linked to it. We have no time here fully to explore this set of issues. It is enough for our purposes to point out the obvious: if, as I think, the *lumpen* element at the bottom of the American social structure is so much larger and more visible than its counterparts in other advanced capitalist societies, we can hardly blame either capitalism in general or—especially—"lower-class culture" in general for the consequences. A much more relativist, a much more modest, and I think a much more concrete, system-critical frame of reference would seem to be called for. There is something in the notion that every society gets the lower classes it deserves. In any event, a relevant aspect of American life, *which is an international scandal because it is uniquely American in scope,* can scarcely be ignored when we worry about the dilution of cultural values by lower classes.

For all I know, the authority culture of the poor will ever remain a fixed barrier both to civic inclusion and to the dreams of liberal educationists. But to the extent this culture exists, it surely exists in large part because it is functional to the physical and psychological needs of those who share it. They will never become middle-class so long as they lack the money or any clearly perceived opportunities. Those individuals within this lower class who do somehow acquire the perception, the opportunity, and the money will ipso facto join

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"the great American dream" of vertical social mobility and cease being members of that class' culture. The rest—the vast majority—can either develop *their own* entire subsociety (as, for example, the proletarians of pre-1938 Vienna did under the auspices of SPO entrepreneurs); or, alternatively, they will find themselves *intrinsically* excluded from civic participation by the terms of reference presented by the *general* society. The price for "civic inclusion" appears to be assimilation to the middle class and its values. This price is economically, psychologically, and structurally beyond the means of the poor.

One measure of civic inclusion, surely, is participation in national elections (assuming no *régime censitaire* barriers to the franchise). The argument I have been making here about the separateness of the American experience, and the immense weight of the ideological and class system of this country in shaping outcomes, finds considerable if circumstantial support at just this point. I have already written very extensively about the American turnout structure and the "party of nonvoters" as a cardinal problem for comparative politics, and will not repeat that discussion here. It is enough to say that in 1980 about three-quarters of the "party of nonvoters" were working-class, compared with somewhat more than two-fifths of the "party of voters," and that American turnout rates are characteristically hugely below those found in countries like Sweden or Italy, where—at this admittedly primitive level—*real* civic inclusion extends from the top to the bottom of the social structure. As I argued many years ago, the "hole" in American turnout corresponds precisely to the places in the social structure where, almost everywhere else, socialist or laborite political alternatives were capable of organizing and mobilizing these elements. Ronald Reagan, it may be said, is only one longer-term political consequence of this remarkable American singularity.

Beyond that, we have the striking puzzle represented by older and very recent survey research on the American public's attitudes toward toleration, civil liberties, First-Amendment rights, and political dissent from mainstream views. Granted the immense stress on the authoritarianism of the American lower classes given in Professor Eckstein's paper, we would expect to find that illiberal attitudes and intolerance of deviant points of view should decline rapidly above such levels. An earlier essay by Seymour Martin Lipset underscored the point by concentrating explicitly on "Working-Class

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Authoritarianism." The truth appears, however, to be that such illiberal/intolerant attitudes are very widespread among the middle classes—and certainly, at least historically, were notorious among business and political elites as well. There may be reason to think that—given enough stress, enough apparent internal challenge to "the liberal tradition in America," the pervasiveness, intensity, and political impact of repressiveness and intolerance *rises,* not *falls,* with social status. After all, the "Great Red Scare" and the Palmer Raids of 1918-20, or McCarthyism in the early Cold War years, were not the fruits of some working-class authoritarian *razzia* to which middle classes and politicoeconomic elites reluctantly yielded. Quite to the contrary: it was the latter that temporarily carried the day.

Moreover, one exceedingly important problem confronting the quality of education in the broadest sense, not alluded to in this paper, should be stressed. This is the impact of never-ending episodes of intolerance at the local school level in various parts of the country over the years. Sometimes this has taken the form of hounding teachers with unorthodox viewpoints out of the community. Even more frequently, it has taken the form of censorship over textbooks and their contents—even in the natural sciences, it should be stressed—as well as over the content of school libraries. Babbitry, laced with religious fundamentalism, is an enduring problem—one with profound and apparently growing political significance. And it is given its force, and its financial backing, from the primary carriers of that old hegemonic liberal tradition, our old friends the American middle classes.

One might wonder from all this whether the United States is not a country with "massified" middle classes and elites, too. We are limited to considering, very briefly, two themes that might bear on such a surmise. The first of these themes, expressed in an extremely wide range of critical literature over the past century or more, is the systemic, sustained pressure in modern capitalist society to turn human beings into things. Perhaps more precisely, it is to turn them into commodities of very unequal market value and in continuous competition with each other. How often, for instance, do we hear people referring as a matter of course to the need to "sell themselves" to others who have power or influence over them? They not infrequently adapt *themselves,* and are adapted by social institutions among the more important of which is the educational system, to the

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needs of huge bureaucratic but mostly private organizations. And the hold these organizations exert on our lives and our consciousnesses deepens with each passing year. The specialized *role* which thus arises—for example, that of businessman—may indeed carry with it comfort, formal education, and the psychological freedom to escape the narrow family authoritarianism of those who play lower-class roles. But do all these things necessarily create the broader view that some other kinds of elites have allegedly possessed?

The kinds of "elite panics" that we have mentioned above as a recurrent theme in American history may give us some pause as we reflect on the answer to that question. For the second theme here is the specifically American fact that the collective code is dominated by a single bourgeois-liberal value system. Louis Hartz was the prophet of this single "liberal tradition" in our own time, even if—as is so usual in such matters—Alexis de Toqueville had quite adequately mapped out this terrain a century and a half earlier. Hartz also did us the service of underscoring the psychological dynamics connected with this (or any) single "tradition" in political culture and belief system. Propositions that are subjected to no serious, organized, legitimate criticism within the society will recede below the level of conscious statement into the realm of self-evident truths. These need only be proclaimed, not defended. By the same token, any serious attack on the core elements of this belief system will tend to be regarded as arising from evil outsiders or their domestic (un-American) "agents."

Collective belief systems are inseparably linked to the legitimacy needs of any existing order. They are essential to the collective bonding that is needed in any functioning sociopolitical system. But this bonding is always *fundamentally problematic* in the United States, in a very special and pervasive way. Significant components of this belief system provide support for the competitive commodification of human beings and for the rational calculus of utilities by each atomic individual, which are embedded very specially in capitalist culture. These elements of that culture destroy pre-existing collective bondings without necessarily providing an acceptable substitute. Such issues, of course, form the basis of that remarkable exercise in moral philosophy, the *Communist Manifesto*. Commodification and individualist utility-maximization, needless to say, have been foci of all serious critiques of liberalism, from what is explicitly set forth in

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Marx and Engels to what is far more than implicit in Pope John Paul II's first major encyclical, *Laborem Exercans* (1981).

The heart of this particular American dilemma would appear to be that very important parts of the *collective*-bonding symbolic code rest on the rational utility calculations among the *individuals* composing the society. The tensions involved in maintaining the balance between the two are always potentially enormous, even if they are usually latent. During periods of exceptional stress, they boil to the surface. The ways in which these tensions are handled when they do boil to the surface are of course highly diverse. But somewhere in this domain may lie some of the explanation for at least two striking peculiarities of this society. One of these is the nationwide elite and middle-class panic episode in our history which we have already mentioned. The constant drumbeat of local "community" pressures on the schools, what is taught there and by whom, may well underscore the permanency of these underlying tensions. The second peculiarity is the prominent role civic religion and fundamentalist "folk religion" play in our political culture—a role without apparent parallel in any other advanced industrial-capitalist social system with which the United States might plausibly be compared. America always seems to teeter more or less at the very edge of anarchy without ever falling over that edge. Elites and middle classes, devoid of ascriptive supports for their status in society, may be even more prone to vertigo than the "lower orders" beneath them, if only because the existential pressures on the latter give them so little leisure to worry about such things.

Of course, following Hartz's model, the fundamental problematic of collective bonding in America is not recognized widely for what it is. Indeed, as a rule it is not recognized at all except in some specialized academic, intellectual, and artistic circles. The tensions this problematic generates, when they reach alarming proportions, are met in the traditional American way—not by defense or argument, but by proclamation. The proclamation is designed to overcome the vertigo and disorientation that are rooted in America's striking lack of defined social space. We have seen a great deal of this type of response in the years since 1980, at few times as clearly as during the Great Patriotic Upsurge of 1984. The underlying tensions between rationality and affect, individual utility maximization and collective bonding, appear occasionally to require management by a

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reactionary revitalization movement on a nationwide scale. But the leitmotiv is almost always being played out somewhere at any given time in more localized arenas of conflict and pressure.

It might now be reasonable to derive three general observations from the foregoing discussion by way of a conclusion to this essay, though these conclusions could probably stand on their own without that discussion as more or less elementary, empirically-derived observations. The first of these, to repeat, is that the gravest *political* threats to civil liberties in this country have historically come from authoritarians who are not poor at all, never have been poor, and win surprisingly broad support for their activities from sections of the political and socioeconomic elite.

Second, as a comparative proposition, the choice seems to be between civic inclusion of the lower classes on their own existential terms, mobilized by their own organizations, or no civic inclusion at all. The former alternative is unthinkable in a country with a hegemonic bourgeois-liberal value system, reinforced as it is from time to time by liberal repressions. The latter is all that is likely to be the case so long as that hegemony endures. Yet another suggested alternative—lower-class incorporation on bourgeois terms—strikes me as an essentially Bonapartist political illusion, typically requiring the appropriate dictatorship to "achieve" in reality. And one can hardly be surprised that the thoughts of intellectuals like Le Bon, Pareto, and others tended increasingly to drift in this direction as the twentieth century unfolded.

Finally, the American educational system at any given time is—like anything else—a reflection of the dominant biases in power and ideology to be expected in a uniquely business civilization. Any of its components—from "St. Grottlesex" to Brookline High School to Revere High School—will reflect fragments of that larger picture, with only the latter helping us to make full sense out of the former. If the lower classes are left civically excluded at all significant levels of their lives, we are likely to find the relatively extreme patterns of social pathology mentioned by Myrdal and many, many others. These will duly be reflected in educational environments, since, as the truism goes, the school cannot fill in for the roles and functions of other equally important but failed social institutions. It strikes me, indeed, as a nice question as to whether "civic incorporation" can

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have anything more than the merest rhetorical meaning in such environments.

More generally, every school system exists for one primary purpose: the reproduction of cultural values and role learning among the young, both of which buttress the existing social and economic order. Education in class-neutral subjects (reading, writing, arithmetic, and so on) is an important component of what the school is supposed to do, but that is because—as alarmed viewers constantly and urgently remind us—we can't manage a world empire and the world's most advanced economic system with masses of functional illiterates in the labor force. Nevertheless, it strikes me that reproduction is primary, and whatever learning that takes place is, as it were, a byproduct. Such a view, I think, might help us to sort out what gets taught to whom, how, and why; and also what does *not* get taught to whom, how, and why. This might lead us to reflect more amply on the mechanisms that (at least as a statistical generalization) determine who gets civically included at all, and, if so, how much civic inclusion he or she gets. It would also remind us of some reasons why it is that, in this country and others, "Great School Wars" break out from time to time; and why it is that, when they do, they become among the most bitterly fought of all political struggles.

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Maurice Wolfthal

The Way They Were: Students in the Golden Age

A teacher complains that when he went to school, students were really students. A principal bewails the disappearance of children who can read. A chancellor exhorts an audience of youngsters to emulate their predecessors.

A mayor comments that when he went to school, teachers could teach classes of forty. An editorial proclaims that the parochial schools are now doing the superb job that the public schools used to do. A black leader asserts that children in our cities do poorly in school because teachers are less dedicated than they once were.

And so the myth of a Golden Age that educators have perpetuated has come back to haunt them with a vengeance. For in mourning the passing of a fabled student body, they have paved the way for those who lament the loss of a fabled corps of teachers. By traditionally vaunting the successes of the past while minimizing the failures, they have painted an unreal, rosy picture that is now accepted as historical truth.

This misconception is not only inaccurate; it hurts the cause of education in an insidious way, by implying that school organization, curriculum, and methodology can make no difference, because, after all, *these* children, or *these* teachers, can't compare to those of long

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ago. A look at the record, however, may put both students and teachers in a more balanced perspective.

Since the years of the Golden Age remain elusive, it is difficult to corroborate or to refute its existence. The statistics clearly indicate, however, that the further back we search, the tinier was the number of college graduates, the smaller the high-school graduating class, and the fewer the number of Americans who completed primary education. In addition, there were wide variations in academic success between different regions of the United States, between rural and urban districts, between schools in the same city. This was specifically true of reading ability.

Twenty years ago, for example, the board of education of the city of New York found it necessary to implement a Corrective Reading Program to service twenty-three thousand pupils in grades three to six who were reading at least two years below level. An additional twenty-nine hundred children in the same grades were enrolled in a Reading Clinic Program, because their deficiencies did not respond to "the ordinary remedial efforts and perhaps not to a Corrective Reading Teacher."[1]

In 1961, New York City schools superintendent John J. Theobald made front-page headlines in the *New York Times* by announcing that one-third of all junior-high-school students were more than two years behind in reading, including ten thousand seventh-graders reading four years below level.[2] In 1958, nearly forty thousand pupils had been left back, mostly for reading retardation, but also because of "general neglect of studies, especially in math."[3]

Youth gangs were responsible for assaults and brawls at many New York City schools in the late 1950s. A journalist for the *World Telegram and Sun* who took a teaching job at a junior high school reported daily classroom disruptions, violence, and near-illiteracy.[4] When a television broadcaster interviewed high-school students in 1959, "their deplorable ignorance set off a national storm of criticism."[5] One critic, writing in 1955, lamented that "standards are geared to an almost invisibly low average" and pointed to "an appalling growth of illiteracy at all levels."[6]

That year, *Why Johnny Can't Read* became a best-seller.[7] The early 1950s had seen a barrage of scathing attacks on the schools: "Cases are cited of pupils in high school who read at elementary grade levels, or whose skill in arithmetic is comparably low, or whose

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knowledge of American history or of similar subjects is highly deficient."[8] In 1952, the director of the Reading Clinic at Temple University found that "retardation in reading appears to be a significant problem at all school levels . . . there are a great many students who appear to qualify as reading achievers, but who do not understand what they read."[9]

In Syracuse, freshmen were found to vary from twelfth- to seventh-grade-level reading in 1950.[10] During the years 1949-53, fifteen New York City schools were studied because they had third-grade children "who had been 'exposed' to reading in the first and second grades but who had made little or no progress."[11] Contrary to popular belief, not all high-school students studied Greek and Latin. In assessing American education, Lawrence Cremin noted the "intellectual flabbiness of school curricula in the 1940s and 1950s."[12]

In many districts, children followed separate courses of study within comprehensive schools, or they attended schools that were designated "commercial," "vocational," "technical," "manual-training," or "college-preparatory." Tracking was more the rule than the exception for those who made it past the eighth grade. In 1952, a teacher wrote of his students, "Some of our vocational boys frankly indicate their lack of interest in certain classroom proceedings by unashamedly placing their heads on desks and actually dozing."[13]

A vocational-high-school student submitted the following letter in English class:

> To whom it may conseare
> My plands in the future is as shown. I am take Auto machince in Hight Schsool and Intend to nihseh. And have Auto machine for a trade as forr my eundicution I wood like to go to Ceallet and study Siness. And in the years to come tride to be a Seniestest in a larbatory And to study Endlgaish. And to live A hnappy life to the day I dide.[14]

The perennial target was poor reading ability. In an article titled, "Are Schools Still Teaching Reading?" one observer commented in 1950, "Old timers, even among teachers, will insist that schools used to teach reading far better than today. I have heard college professors say that, whereas fifty years ago students were properly 'prepared' for college, today many of them cannot read."[15]

Four years earlier, the same complaint had been made in a similarly titled piece, "Can Your Child Really Read? Why Our High Schools

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Are in Collapse." Its author asserted that "at least a third of the entire secondary school population" could not "read on a fifth-grade level or write a coherent paragraph reasonably free of errors." He estimated that these "wholesome" but illiterate youngsters numbered two and a half million nationally."[16]

In Maryland, a superintendent of schools reported in 1945 that in his county "over 30 percent of the pupils entering the seventh grade" were reading two or more years below level. He added: "We have known for years that a large percent of pupils who enter high school are seriously retarded in reading."[17] In Chicago, almost fifty percent of second-term ninth-grade students at the Cregier Branch of McKinley High School were reading two to four years below level.[18]

In New York City, plans were made in 1943 to open a Reading Guidance Center for junior-high-school students "to determine why an appreciable number of pupils with average or better intelligence reach the junior high schools with reading levels indicating retardation of several years."[19] Although the Center originally serviced three schools, it soon expanded to meet the needs of another fifteen schools.

"Reading Problems of Pressing Importance" came to public attention when young men inducted into the army in the early 1940s for service in World War II were often found unfit by virtue of reading deficiencies. An estimated "200,000 men were barred from military service because of illiteracy."[20] Not only dropouts were known to read poorly, however. In 1940, it was noted that "at various times during the past twenty years, several investigators have pointed out that the reading ability of a considerable number of college students is regrettably inadequate."[21]

In 1938, the Regents of New York State reported that in their state "the boys and girls who leave high school without graduating outnumber the graduates nearly two to one."[22] Of those who finished, ten percent of the seniors scored less than an eighth-grade reading level.[23] In an article on reading deficiencies among high-school and college students in 1938, attention was drawn to "students who have a supreme indifference and often a perverted attitude toward reading. Such students are frequently described as 'non-readers.' "[24]

Leonard Covello, the first principal of Benjamin Franklin High School in New York City, recalls in his autobiography that in the

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early years of the school's existence there were so many dropouts that they were invited to form an "Old Friendship Club."[25] Although there were students at Benjamin Franklin in the 1930s who did well, there were others, like "Lupino," who "caused the dean and teachers a great deal of trouble by fighting in the corridors and disrupting his classes."[26] "Tulio Cellano" was another boy who "could not stay an hour in a classroom without picking a fight with some companion, annoying a teacher, or generally misbehaving in a dozen different ways."[27]

One Chicago high school in 1936 had at least 124 ninth graders who were reading three to six years below level.[28] At the Roslyn, New York, High School, a class of ninth graders averaged a reading level of 6.3.[29] In 1930, ninety-six eleventh graders in Evansville, Indiana, were taking remedial reading, being three years below level on the average.[30]

In 1929, the intermediate grades were plagued by "a large number of pupils playing 'hookey.' "[31] Another problem facing the schools was a body of pupils who were "practically unable to learn to read under the prevailing methods of instruction."[32] In 1928, remedial instruction was given to ninth graders at Little Falls, Minnesota, High School. Among those getting help, 19 percent were reading at a seventh- or eighth-grade level, and 39 percent were below seventh grade.[33] Reading retardation among seventh and eighth graders in Chicago during 1926-28 was most frequently due to "meager reading experience."[34] In 1920, nineteen freshmen at the Washburn, Wisconsin, High School "showed less than sixth-grade standard in comprehension."[35]

Standardized reading test scores are hard to find before World War I, but the 1911-13 Committee on School Inquiry asserted in its *Final Report* that in the U.S. "illiteracy is fifty times greater than that of Germany, Norway, Sweden, or Denmark."[36] That teachers were not satisfied with the caliber of their students is attested to by the words of the department heads at Washington Irving High School in New York City: "It is a waste of time therefore for a teacher to say, 'I cannot educate this child; it is the child's fault' . . . It is useless to say, 'This is the worst class I ever had; this class is below level,' etc."[37] The year was 1911.

Four years earlier, students who were deemed to be "duller mentally . . . who are slow . . . and who feel the tedium of school"[38]

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were urged to take manual training to prevent truancy. Leonard Covello, who taught at De Witt Clinton High School in New York at the turn of the century, recalls that "there was a steady flow of failures and drop-outs."[39] He remembers a French teacher there describing his students as "monsters, planning and scheming how they can torment and tantalize you . . . No one can teach them."[40]

The Golden Age probably did not flourish in the nineteenth century either. In 1894, the Committee of Ten mentioned that "only a small proportion of all the children in the country . . . show themselves able to profit by an education prolonged to the eighteenth year," and that of those who graduated, "only an insignificant percentage" went to college.[41] An observer in 1893 argued that a differentiated high-school curriculum was needed because "few boys are mentally fitted to be scholars or to take a University course."[42]

We leave the final word to a schoolman bemoaning the level of students in 1874:

> We are vainly trying to give advanced instruction to numbers who ought not to be in the High School. It is the opinion of high school teachers that from one fourth to one half of the pupils are not greatly benefited by their course of study. These students lack interest, industry, effort, and purpose, and are too feebly endowed mentally . . . They become discouraged and querulous; they drop out along the way; they act as a dead weight upon the others; and they keep the average scholarship and instruction at a low level."[43]

To suggest that there was no Golden Age is, to be sure, to take a heretical position. Not only the academic failures but also the rigid dress codes, the summary expulsions, and the widespread corporal punishment are all indications that the past does not point the way to educational reform. Yet almost without exception, the critiques and proposals of the last two years have been of the "Let's get back to . . ." variety. What we need, rather, is to take a hard look at those systemic ailments that have plagued compulsory universal education right from its inception.

We need to rethink statutes that keep children in school against their will instead of offering twelve years of schooling to be taken at any point in a lifetime. We need to reconsider the whole-class methodology that still predominates, and to replace it, finally, with an education that is individualized in practice as well as theory. We need to abolish the useless, arbitrary classifications of grade level, and

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its corollary concepts, promotion and retention. We need to affirm that the purpose of school is to learn, and not to test, sort, select, and reject students.

On the other hand, to dream of students that never were is to guarantee dissatisfaction and frustration for future generations of teachers and students.

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Nathan Glazer

Some Very Modest Proposals for the Improvement of American Education

THAT WE CAN DO A GREAT DEAL for the sorry state of American education with more money is generally accepted. Even apparently modest proposals will, however, cost a great deal of money. Consider something as simple as increasing the average compensation of American teachers—who are generally considered underpaid—by $2,000 a year each. The bill would come to five billion dollars a year. A similar figure is reached by the report of the highly qualified Twentieth Century Fund Task Force on Federal, Elementary, and Secondary Educational Policy, which proposes fellowships and additional compensation for master teachers. Reducing class size 10 percent, or increasing the number of teachers by the same percentage would cost another five billion dollars. With present-day federal deficits, these look like small sums, but since education is paid for almost entirely by states and local government, these modest proposals would lead to substantial and painful tax increases. (I leave aside for the moment the views of skeptics who believe that none of these changes would matter.)

But the occasional visitor to American schools will note some changes that would cost much less, nothing at all, or even save money—and yet would improve at least the educational *environment* in American schools (once again, we ignore those skeptics who would insist that even a better educational environment cannot be guaranteed to improve educational achievement). In the spirit of evoking further cheap proposals, here is a small list of suggestions that, to my

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mind at least—and the mind I believe of any adult who visits American public schools—would mean a clear plus for American education:

1. *Disconnect all loudspeaker systems in American schools—or at least reserve them, like the hotline between Moscow and Washington, for only the gravest emergencies.* The American classroom—and the American teacher and his or her charges—is continually interrupted by announcements from central headquarters over the loudspeaker system. These remind teachers to bring in some form or other; or students to bring in some form or other; or students engaged in some activity to remember to come to practice or rehearsal; or they announce a change of time for some activity. There is nothing so unnerving to a teacher engaged in trying to explain something, or a student engaged in trying to understand something, as the crackle of the loudspeaker prepared to issue an announcement, and the harsh and gravelly voice (the systems are not obviously of the highest grade) of the announcement itself.

Aside from questions of personal taste, why would this be a good idea? As I have suggested, one reason is that the loudspeaker interrupts efforts to communicate complicated material that requires undivided attention. Second, it demeans the teacher as professional: every announcement tells her whatever she is doing is not very important and can be interrupted at any time. Third, it accentuates the notion of hierarchy in education—the principal and assistant principal are the important people, and command time and attention even in the midst of instruction. Perhaps I have been softened by too many years as a college teacher, but it would be unimaginable that a loudspeaker, if one existed, would ever interrupt a college class except under conditions of the gravest and most immediate threat to life and limb. One way of showing students that education is important is not to interrupt it for band-rehearsal announcements.

2. *Disarm the school.* One of the most depressing aspects of the urban school in the United States is the degree of security manifest within it, and that seems to me quite contradictory to what a school should be. Outer doors are locked. Security guards are present in the corridors. Internal doors are locked. Passes are necessary to enter the school or move within it, for outsiders and for students. Students are marched in groups from classroom to classroom, under the eye of the

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teachers. It is understandable that given the conditions in lower-class areas in our large cities—and not only lower-class areas—some degree of security-mindedness is necessary. There is valuable equipment—typewriters, computers, audio-visual equipment—that can be stolen; vandalism is a serious concern; marauders can enter the school in search for equipment, or teachers' pocketbooks, or to threaten directly personal safety in search of money or sex, and so on. School integration and busing, at least in their initial stages, have contributed to increased interracial tensions in schools and have in part severed the link between community and school. The difference in ethnic and racial composition of faculty, other staff, administrators, and students contributes to the same end.

Having acknowledged all this, I still believe the school should feel less like a prison than it does. One should examine to what extent outside doors must be closed; to what extent the security guard cannot be replaced by local parents, volunteer or paid; the degree to which the endless bells indicating "stop" and "go" are really necessary. I suspect that now that the most difficult period of school integration has passed, now that teachers and administrators and staff more closely parallel in race and ethnic background students and community owing to the increase in black and Hispanic teachers and administrators, we may be saddled with more security than we need. Here we come to the sticky problem of *removing* security measures whose need has decreased. What school board will open itself to suit or to public criticism by deliberately providing *less* security? And yet one must consider the atmosphere of the school and a school's primary objective as a teaching agent: can this be reconciled with a condition of maximum security? Perhaps there are lessons to be learned from colleges and community colleges in older urban areas, which in my experience do seem to manage with less security. One reason is that there are more adults around in such institutions. Is that a hint as to how we could manage better in our public schools?

3. *Enlist the children in keeping the school clean.* Occasionally we see a practice abroad that suggests possible transfer to the American scene. In Japan, the children clean the school. There is a time of day when mops and pails and brooms come out, and the children sweep up and wash up. This does, I am sure, suggest to the children that this is *their* school, that it is not simply a matter of being forced to go to

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a foreign institution that imposes alien demands upon them. I can imagine some obstacles in the way of instituting regular student clean-up in American schools—custodians' unions, for example, might object. But they can be reassured that children don't do that good a job, and they will still be needed. Once again, as in the case of the security problem, one wants to create in the school, if at all possible, a common enterprise of teachers and students, without the latter being bored and resistant, the former, in response, becoming equally indifferent. The school should be seen as everyone's workplace—and participation in cleaning the school will help.

4. *Save old schools.* Build fewer new ones. It has often surprised me that while in schools such as Eton and Oxford—and indeed well-known private schools and colleges in the United States—old buildings are prized, in so many communities older public schools are torn down when to the naked eye they have many virtues that would warrant their maintenance and use. Only a few blocks from where I live, an excellent example of late nineteenth-century fine brickwork and carved stonework that served as the Cambridge Latin School came down for a remodeling. The carved elements are still displayed about the remodeled school, but why a building of such character should have deserved demolition escaped my understanding, particularly since one can take it almost as a given that a school building put up before the 1940s will be built of heavier and sturdier materials than one constructed today. Even the inconveniences of the old can possess a charm that makes them worthwhile. And indeed many of the reforms that seemed to require new buildings (for example, classrooms without walls, concentrated around activities centers in large open rooms) have turned out, on use, to be not so desirable. Our aim should be to give each school a history, a character, something that at least some students respond to. The pressures for new buildings are enormous, and sometimes perfectly legitimate (as when communities expand), but often illegitimate, as when builders and building-trades workers and contract-givers seek an opportunity or when state aid makes it appear as if a new building won't cost anything.

5. *Look on new hardware with a skeptical eye.* I think it likely that the passion for the new in the way of teaching-hardware not only does not contribute to higher educational achievement but may well

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serve as a temporary means to evade the real and hard tasks of teaching—which really require almost no hardware at all, besides textbooks, blackboard, and chalk. Admittedly, when one comes to high-school science, something more is called for. And yet our tendency is to always find cover behind new hardware. It's *fun* to get new audio-visual equipment, new rooms equipped with them in which all kinds of things can be done by flicking a switch or twisting a dial, or, as is now the case, to decide what kind of personal computers and software are necessary for a good educational program. Once again, foreign experience can be enlightening. When Japanese education was already well ahead of American, most Japanese schools were in prewar wooden buildings. (They are now as up-to-date as ours, but neither their age nor up-to-dateness has much to do with their good record of achievement.) Resisting the appeal of new hardware not only saves money, and provides less in the way of saleable goods to burglarize, but it also prevents distraction from the principal tasks of reading, writing, and calculating. When it turns out that computers and new software are shown to do a better job at these key tasks—I am skeptical as to whether this will ever be the case—there will be time enough to splurge on new equipment. The teacher, alone, up front, explaining, encouraging, guiding, is the heart of the matter—the rest is fun, and very helpful to corporate income, and gives an inflated headquarters staff something new to do. But students will have time enough to learn about computers when they get to college, and getting there will depend almost not at all on what they can do with computers, but how well they understand words and sentences, and how well they do at simple mathematics.

There is nothing wrong with old textbooks, too. Recently, reviewing some recent high-school American history texts, I was astonished to discover they come out in new editions every two years or so, and not because the main body of the text is improved, but because the textbook wants to be able to claim it covers the very last presidential campaign, and the events of the last few years. This is a waste of time and energy and money. There is enough to teach in American history up to 1950 or 1960 not to worry about whether the text includes Reagan's tax cuts. I suspect many new texts in other areas also offer little advantage over the older ones. There is also a virtue in a teacher becoming acquainted with a particular textbook. When I read that a school is disadvantaged because its textbooks are old, I am always

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mystified. Even the newest advances in physics and biology might well be reserved for college.

6. *Expand the pool from which we draw good teachers.* This general heading covers a number of simple and concrete things, such as: if a teacher is considered qualified to teach at a good private school, that teacher should be considered qualified to teach at a public school. It has always seemed to me ridiculous that teachers accepted at the best private schools in New York City or top preparatory schools in the country would not be allowed to teach in the public school system of New York or Boston. Often, they are willing—after all, the pay is better in public schools and there are greater fringe benefits. They might, it is true, be driven out of those schools by the challenge of lower- and working-class children. But when they are willing, it seems unbelievable that the teacher qualified (or so Brearley thinks) for Brearley will not be allowed to teach at P.S. 122. Greater use of part-time teachers might also be able to draw upon people with qualities that we are told the average teacher unfortunately doesn't possess—such as a higher level of competence in writing and mathematics.

Our recurrent concern with foreign-language teaching should lead us to recruit foreign-born teachers. There are problems in getting teaching jobs today in Germany and France—yet teachers there are typically drawn from pools of students with higher academic skills than is the case in this country. Paradoxically, we make it easy for teachers of Spanish-language background to get jobs owing to the expansion of bilingual programs—but then their teaching is confined to children whose Spanish accent doesn't need improvement. It would make more sense to expose children of foreign-language background more to teachers with native English—and children from English-speaking families to teachers who speak French, German, Spanish, and, why not, Japanese, and Chinese natively. This would mean that rules requiring that a teacher must be a citizen, or must speak English without an accent, should be lifted for special teachers with special tasks. Perhaps we could make the most of the oversupply of teachers in some foreign countries by using them to teach mathematics—a subject where accent doesn't count. The school system in Georgia is already recruiting from Germany. Colleges often use teaching assistants whose English is not native and far from

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perfect, including Asians from Korea and China, to assist in science and mathematics courses. (There are many state laws which would not permit them to teach in elementary and secondary schools.)

All the suggestions above eschew any involvement with some great issues of education—tradition or reform, the teaching of values, the role of religion in the schools—that have in the past dominated arguments over education and still do today. But I add one more proposal that is still, I am afraid, somewhat controversial:

7. *Let students, within reason, pick their schools, or let parents choose them for them.* All those informed on school issues will sense the heaving depths of controversy under this apparently modest proposal. Does this mean they might choose parochial schools, without being required to pay tuition out of their own pockets? Or does this mean black children would be allowed to attend schools in black areas, and whites in white areas, or the reverse if each is so inclined? As we all know, the two great issues of religion and race stand in the way of any such simple and commonsensical arrangement. Students are regularly bused from one section of a city to another because of their race, and students cannot without financial penalty attend that substantial sector of schools—30 percent or so in most Northern and Midwestern cities—that are called "private." I ignore the question of whether, holding all factors constant, students do "better" in private or public schools, in racially well-mixed or hardly mixed schools. The evidence will always be uncertain. What is perhaps less arguable is that students will do better in a school that forms a community, in which teachers, parents, and students all agree that *that* is the school they want to teach in, to attend, to send their children to. I would guess that this is the kind of school most of the readers of this article have attended; it is the kind of school, alas, that our complex racial and religious history makes it harder and harder for those of minority race or of lower- and working-class status to attend.

I have eschewed the grand proposals—for curriculum change, for improving the quality of entering teachers, for checking on the competence of teachers in service, for establishing national standards for achievement in different levels of education—all of which now form the agenda for many state commissions of educational reform,

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and all of which seem reasonable to me. Rather, I have concentrated on a variety of other things that serve to remove distraction, to open the school to those of quality who would be willing to enter it to improve it, to concentrate on the essentials of teaching and learning as I (and many others) have experienced it. It would be possible to propose larger changes in the same direction: for example, reduce the size of the bureaucracies in urban school systems. Some of my modest proposals are insidiously intended to do this—if there were less effort devoted to building new schools, buying new equipment, evaluating new textbooks, or busing children, there would be no need to maintain quite so many people at headquarters. Or so I would hope.

In the meantime, why not disconnect the loudspeakers?

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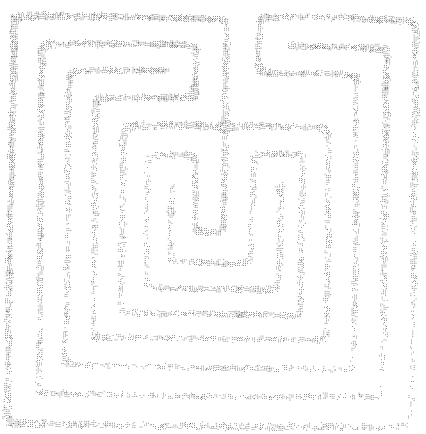

Perspectives on Education

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The statements that follow have been edited from transcripts of conversations that took place between the Editor and selected educators, businessmen, and politicians who share an interest in the quality and future of schools. The questions and responses of the Editor have been omitted principally for reasons of space but also to amplify the comments of the individual participants.

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Joseph A. Califano, Jr.

You say that we are involved in an enormous social experiment, to provide universal education. No century before our own has tried it, and you ask what, from my own experience, from my own recollections of holding public office, and having experiences of many kinds, I think is happening today. How well are we doing with different social groups? What is my general impression twenty to thirty years after we began to make the effort to provide something like universal access?

Let me try to put that question in context. We live in a society where some level of education is necessary for everybody. I think that level varies, varies tremendously, particularly once you get beyond the second year of high school. Up to that point, the objective is pretty much the same for all: you ought to have command of the basics—enough to read, vote, understand; to be, if you will, politically and functionally literate, to make out a driver's license, comprehend instructions. After that, the objective varies—and we've lost track of that fact. We have created a situation in which everybody wants to go to college; everybody thinks he ought to go to college. And so college is there; many of the community colleges are really the high schools of twenty-five years ago. We call them colleges and everybody feels better. In effect, in many cases, we are adding a couple of years of school just to call it college. I think, on the basis of my experience particularly at HEW, that midway through high school substantial numbers of students ought to be taught a vocation. That is not generally acknowledged today. We have created a situation where it is thought to be better to sit in an office as an accountant than to lay bricks or provide home-care to the elderly. Our values are skewed; we have forgotten that some of the greatest works of art were created by craftsmen. We must remember that all human work carries with it a special dignity.

We paid a great deal of attention to vocational education at HEW; indeed, we virtually started the program in the Great Society when I worked for President Johnson. By and large, our society seems to look down on vocational education. If there were castes and classes

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in this country, in the sense that there are in India, we would be saying that the lower class, the bottom class, is destined for vocational education. That's wrong. We must work to change that attitude.

One of the over-arching things I learned at HEW, in the poverty program and in many of the government education programs, was that we make a serious mistake in getting parents interested in the curriculum and in the administration of schools. Creating parent advisory committees and the like too often creates confusion. What does work and what needs to be done, is to get parents interested in their own child. We learned a little of that from Jesse Jackson and Operation PUSH. We also learned it from Billy Regan, who runs the school system in Houston, Texas.

When I was at HEW, Houston was one of the few major urban school systems with a significant proportion of poor and minority students in which third-grade students were reading and doing math at the third-grade level. I'm convinced that the crucial factor was that the parents got involved with their own kids, keeping the television sets off during the week, coming to pick up their report cards, letting their kids know that they cared about schooling.

I think there's a bigger problem with parents than there is with the educational system. Reading scores, for example, have gone down more sharply than math scores. Why? Because you learn math in the classroom, but you learn reading at home. It is apparent from SAT scores, and from other things, that kids read very little. They watch television. They do what their parents do. The parents are permissive. They live a much more libertarian, non-intellectual lifestyle than they admit. So, I think that's a big factor.

My sense is that there is discontent among parents who cannot choose the school they want for their children. I don't mean choose a private school. You can choose your school by being able to afford to live in the suburbs or in a relatively good neighborhood. I found discontent among parents who cared and who felt helpless.

You find some parents, with children in poor schools, who get very angry about the schools. They are often upwardly mobile black parents, Hispanic parents. There's a program here in Washington. My son Joe teaches in it; it's called HAP, the Higher Achievement Program. It's run in the summer by Gonzaga, the inner-city Jesuit High School, for fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, and maybe eighth graders. They teach kids to read; they teach comprehension, vocabulary, and basic math; that's all they teach. The kids go there for nine weeks; they've just been through a school year; they are basically kids

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whose parents want them to learn. In the school my son's in they're all black; every kid is black. And he's got some kids from last year back again. Those parents care; those kids care. Now, they're a very small proportion of the kids in the D.C. public-school system. But those parents know that their kids are not getting a good education in the public schools.

My view is that at certain levels parents are more of a problem than teachers. If you get parents motivating their kids, those kids will learn even from mediocre teachers. Most of the great minds of this country were not formed by great teachers at the elementary and secondary education level where so many building blocks are being set in place. It's not necessarily more money that's going to make the teachers more able. God, in his wisdom, doesn't make everybody a great teacher. I think, by and large, that it's not the teachers that make it impossible for bright kids to score well and do well. I don't mean test scores; I mean succeed, achieve, develop their minds and their talents.

There's no way you can somehow make a school an island of anything—of learning, of peace, of intellectual achievement—and let everything else around it wallow in chaos. We tried to use the schools in this country to integrate our population. When we started the process in the southern schools, and in certain northern schools, we saw all this racial conflict. Then we looked at the schools and said, isn't what's happening in schools terrible. All the schools did was mirror what was going on in the society. You go to Harlem, 116th Street and Eighth Avenue; a school in that neighborhood is not going to be insulated from the fact that you can buy heroin and other drugs on any corner. It's a miracle that any school is functioning there. A single-parent mother, in that environment, probably has everything she can do just to keep her kids alive and safe, free of drugs. At that point, I think you've got to condemn the larger society that says, in effect, we'll forget about Harlem, we'll leave drugs up there as long as the problem is self-contained; we're all right down here on the Westside or the Eastside.

In the middle-class suburbs, if there is a problem, it's more likely to be a function of the attitudes of parents. I'm not saying parents can do it all, or that kids can do it all. I'm simply saying that parents are at least as responsible as the school. A parent that doesn't give a damn about whether his or her child learns anything, and doesn't express approval or disapproval, is guaranteeing that the child is not going to do as well as he or she should.

I have in the last couple of weeks fortuitously seen two or three movies that my fourteen-year-old daughter said I really ought to see.

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She'd seen them on a video cassette. I was appalled. You've got to be appalled at the music, the imagery, the speech. How does all this affect the young?

My mother taught in the New York City school system for thirty-five years. She's now retired. She's ninety-three years old. She grew up in New York at a time when if you were a bright Irish, Italian, or Jewish girl, you went to high school. If you were really bright you went on to Columbia Teachers College for one year; then you went back and taught elementary school in the New York City school system. Now, those women worked in an environment where parents (and teachers) were telling the kids they were teaching that learning was essential to success. Also, I think that experience raises the question of whether we need, among other things, four years of college plus a masters degree, to teach elementary school. We're requiring six years of higher education for a teacher's certificate; that's six times the education my mother received sixty years ago. And we're not getting our money's worth.

Some of these arbitrary requirements stem from the anonymity of bigness. How do you know on a large scale that teachers will be qualified? By imposing what appear to be impressive credential-earning procedures. It's a political protection, in a sense. If I'm running a school system and have five thousand teachers in my charge, and some teacher does something really horrendous, where is my protection? Well, I invoke the standards set up by the state legislature: this person met those standards; therefore, I've done my job. I happen to think that much of this "credentialling" is a mistake, but it's not a mistake made just in elementary schools.

You take a university like Harvard, the Kennedy School of Government, for example, where I have some experience. We are constantly told that they are producing more and more terrific people, mostly economists and analysts, who are said to be superbly trained. My own view is that we need people in government that know political management. We need men and women who know how to run a program, who understand politics, who know how to negotiate among all these competing interest groups. Most of the social programs we're funding in Washington are operated in the states by individuals who realize that they have a constitutional right to some measure of independence from the national government. Well, where do we get people to teach those who will be going into the field? The problem at the Kennedy School is you can't get tenure as a professor without the right credentials. You need the Ph.D. The idea that it may be more useful to recruit from those who really know

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how to teach people about managing public programs, and don't have a Ph.D. is impossible for universities to accept. That's Harvard University, our greatest university. They've got their standards, which in some respects are just as artificial as those that exist at the local level for elementary-school teachers.

I agree that we have to provide more money for our best teachers. We have to reward those teachers who are delivering. There are ways to judge this. We do it in every walk of life. There's no reason why we can't do it in public education. I also think that we have to provide greater recognition of how important teaching is. You can call it dignity; you can call it self-worth. What teachers are doing is critical, and they're not recognized for it. A noisy few bring some of the problem on themselves. The shouting and screaming for more money, more this and more that, with television filming the more extreme of those statements, does them no good. Still, they need more recognition from society.

It's not going to be easy to achieve this. New political alliances need to be made. I think grandparents can do a lot; it's important to keep them interested in the school system. Indeed, had I remained at HEW for a longer period, one of my ideas was to get grandparents engaged, in a public and political sense, in supporting the school systems. I had hoped to mount a program to do that, to get the states interested in doing it. Why? Because older people vote; 80 percent of them vote. The largest number of young people, under twenty-five, to vote in any presidential election was in 1964 when Lyndon Johnson ran; the number then was just around 20 percent. If I look at our society, my own view is that the greatest differences between people is not between men and women, or between blacks and whites. The difference is between people who have kids and those who do not.

I think every corporation should join to help a high school. Again, not to get involved in the curriculum, but to get involved in all those things that will help to motivate kids. To provide athletic and other equipment for intramural programs that the school system can't afford. To provide prizes for the best story, the best school play, the best grade increases, year to year. To provide the kind of encouragement that will motivate kids to do better, because if they become engaged in the school, they're going to get more out of it.

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Terrel H. Bell

I would like to talk about the Washington, D.C., schools and to comment about some other inner-city schools that have a concentration of both poor and minority students. I do believe that the D.C. schools have been improving significantly in their capacity to reach and to teach the middle and the bottom portion of this population. I think if we compared the situation ten years ago with the situation today, we would say, "My, they have come a long way." But, if we were to focus on the bright and most academically able, we would have to say that there has not been as much progress there. And in spite of our efforts, the high-school completion rate in Washington is dreadfully low—45 percent in 1982. Forty-five percent of the ninth-grade students were dropping out without graduating from high school. Now, I don't believe that the D.C. schools are below (or if they are, it's not very significantly below) other inner-city school systems that have high concentrations of minority and poverty children. If you looked at New York City or Chicago—and those are much larger cities than our nation's capitol—and if you located an equivalent sub-group there, I think you would find similar numbers with respect to attrition.

The fact that the more affluent black parents are looking for alternatives to the Washington, D.C., public schools is understandable, and at the same time it is disconcerting. Many parents who made it through the public schools largely because they were bright and able, maybe didn't do as well as they did by utilizing our higher education system and the opportunities and the student aid that we now have to provide access. They made it on their own. They became professionals. Now they are looking—and you can't criticize them unduly for this—they are looking for more challenging academic environments for their children. I think that the recent focus on—we've worn the phrase out—"excellence in education" is an example of this. I think that public scrutiny has also been helping. Whether we will get the big reforms that we need for the D.C. school system really to turn the corner is yet to be determined. I believe that we are going to have to wrest control and management away from the establishment, if we are ever going to see a big change in the schools. That's easy to say but hard to put into practice.

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We have monstrous entities, and we have to break them up into manageable parts. Take the New York City school system or even the D.C. schools. I see no reason for us to have such large governmental units and I think that we need to break them down into smaller entities. We need to break up the master contract that the union has negotiated that keeps us locked into an each-year-is-a-repeat-of-the-year-before pattern. We can't just break out of all of this. Now, that means we must continue to keep the interest of the governors and the state legislatures aroused. We now have their attention, and governors generally have provided splendid leadership. There are individuals like Lamar Alexander in Tennessee and Governor Bill Winter in Mississippi. Winter managed to get a 30-percent hike in school funding. Bill Clinton of Arkansas and Dick Riley of South Carolina pushed for that also. Now, these are governors who have put their political lives on the line for the schools. They have a strong commitment in this direction.

The next step has to be to look at the question of size, and to see whether too large a system leads to stifled creative initiatives. In higher education, with a few exceptions, we have drawn the line at some point. Why do institutions that *could* grow and be much larger restrict their size? Why doesn't Derek Bok let down the barriers and let Harvard enrollment grow to 25,000 or 250,000 students? We know the reason for that. He has a commitment to quality. He knows that Harvard can't do what it aspires to do, and do it well, if he created such a large, unwieldy monster and still called it Harvard University. Yet we have never learned this lesson with respect to the big-city school systems in the United States. If you are looking for quality, if you are looking for creativity, you have to look elsewhere. If a city's school system reaches 25,000 or 30,000 enrollment, we ought to be examining how we can move to create other units. Look at some of the universities—public universities that are enormous—and if you trace their history, you see that some of them *are* learning that they must restrain their size. It takes courage for public institutions—the Michigans, the Cal Berkeleys—to do this because they must resist the financial incentive to take in more students. Numbers drive budgets: the more students you have, the more money you get from the legislature. Even with that temptation and that financial incentive, these schools are turning students away. I know that higher education is entirely different and we can't draw simple parallels, but the point I am making is that I believe that the huge school systems must be broken up. In addition to that, I think we need to change our

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approach to recruiting and identifying and promoting leaders; leadership has to be there for changes to be effected.

We need to keep in mind that the school systems are creatures of the state legislatures. I know how hard it is to reorganize school-district boundaries. I have been a school politician for a number of years; I know how difficult that is. But we have to face up to these difficulties. What the governors I mentioned have done is to take their lumps over some of the positions they've taken on quality. One example of this is Governor Bill Clinton of Arkansas. He's a young man, a Rhodes Scholar, a very brilliant advocate of education, and he pressed vigorously for a state examination. We are finally saying that, just as aspiring lawyers must pass the bar exam in addition to graduating from law school, aspiring teachers should have to pass this state examination in addition to earning a degree and getting a teaching credential. What Clinton basically said was that the teachers of Arkansas have to prove that they have attained a certain threshold level of literacy or the state will revoke their license to teach. Now, this is radical because it doesn't just apply to *new* teachers coming in. Governor Clinton pressed to have all of the teachers in Arkansas, including some who have taught for twenty years, to come take the examination. The state legislature went along and the teachers who put him in office are furious about it. I mention this to illustrate that here's a governor who ran with the teachers' support and has taken a stand on a measure that he thinks relates to quality. I could say the same thing about the neighboring state of Tennessee and Lamar Alexander's position on the Master Teacher Program. He wanted to create a career ladder for teachers that would be the equivalent of academic rank in higher education, and they beat him in the first session of the legislature. But he came back and won the second time. He pushed through a sales-tax increase. Lamar told me that his problem was that he was trying to take money away from people who didn't want to pay it and give it to people who didn't want to receive it. I think this shows that we're seeing the beginning of what could turn into quite a renaissance of our schools—maybe. I say maybe, because I am not certain yet.

Texas is another interesting example of a state with strong educational leadership. To everyone's surprise—and to some of us Republicans' chagrin—a Democratic governor, Mark White, beat Bill Clemens. White promised, during the election campaign, to ask for a 25-percent increase in teachers' salaries. In correspondence and in conversations I had with him, I urged him to pay those who are outstanding in their performance a differential salary, much the way

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Alexander was pushing for in Tennessee. California had enacted such a policy and so has Florida under the leadership of Governor Bob Graham. But White wasn't very enthusiastic about doing that, and said, "Well, we'll do that later, after we raise salaries; salaries are so low, we need to raise them all 25 percent." My concern was that there were so many whom we would be rewarding and encouraging to stay who really ought to be moving on. We need to reward excellence and to punish mediocrity, if we are going to get anywhere. White then appointed a commission to study the Texas schools, and appointed Ross Perot, a billionaire down there, to chair it. Well, Ross Perot really created a stir in the state of Texas, attacking their obsession with athletics and many other things clear down to the elementary-school level. But he came out with a recommendation that they revise the way they compensate the teacher, and this has led to real changes in that enormous state. Again, I highlight this incident to say that as we look at where education is and where it is going, and as we look at politics in relation to this, it's important that we keep the political leaders out front. And this will happen if they continue to see that it's good for them politically to be there.

Other states have initiated other reforms regarding the teaching profession, if I may use that term. New York, for example, increased its high-school graduation requirement. Thirty-five states say it's okay to graduate from high school with only one year of science and one year of math, even though our National Commission report recommended three years of math and science and four years of English, and so on. The traditional "key" states—New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Massachusetts—have moved forward with reforms in this area, but I think as you look at the political power of the organized teaching profession, you find that it is very difficult to enact legislation. In New York State, for example, it would be extremely difficult to implement a Master Teacher Program or merit system. It wasn't all that easy for California.

I think that if those governors who are very bright and perceptive will look out across the statewide education system—kindergarten through graduate school—and ask for some data, they will begin to arrive at conclusions that will lead them to press for reforms. Those are going to be the difficult moves to make: breaking up some of the teacher licensing laws that don't make sense, breaking up these enormous units and creating conditions conducive to more creativity in academia.

Since these reforms are not going to be accomplished without a great deal of struggle, I think we need to come forward with evidence.

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We need to publish evidence in our periodical literature and in the editorial pages of our newspapers, and we need to generate some popular acclaim for change. We need to spur this effort by publishing comparisons. A year ago, we published a ranking of the fifty states. We ranked them from first to fiftieth—in dropout rate, in SAT and ACT scores, in teacher salaries, in the percent of the population that is minority, in percentage of the student population that is living below the poverty line. We had a number of these categories and this was the first time that all the facts had been put together. This focused people's attention. Before this, it was like going to a ballgame where there's no scoreboard.

I am hoping that the school systems will take this a step further and sponsor a similar ranking of cities. With luck, this would encourage the individual school systems to publish their own comparative data, which might stimulate a yearning for moving to the top—although I haven't seen that yet. I challenged this notion last time, but we are nearly ready to publish the new ranking of the states—it comes out about the first of the year—and I have already heard from some of the states, calling to ask when the rankings are coming out. I said, "My, I don't know." They said, "Well, we are up this time." What they are saying is, we want some credit for improvement. You ranked us down *here* last time; *now* we are up *here* and we want that noted. If we can succeed in tapping this competitive spirit, we will begin to see some real changes.

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Albert Shanker

You have asked me to consider the problems of public education in Boston, New York, and Washington—in what ways they are similar and how they differ. I do think it is possible to make distinctions, despite the fact that there are many similarities; we are talking about three cities that have large minority student populations now, and a

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large number of students who present problems in terms of being unable to write, of being disruptive or violent, of being handicapped: these are not students who are likely to attract teachers interested in teaching academic subjects at a certain level and in getting satisfaction from working with high-achieving students. Now, those problems are common to the three cities, but there are also some very great differences. Boston is a city that has a fairly well-documented history of racial practices by the school board over many years, practices that are pretty open and deliberate. That's a very different history from New York City where you may have had a disparate racial impact of various policies. The fact is that New York City has had an examination system that probably came in to offset the effects of Boss Tweed, and resulted in a very different method of teacher selection, student placement, and so forth; New York has also been a very liberal city on racial policies, and has therefore had a somewhat different history. Washington is another case again because it is *politically* a black city, and has been for some time. There, you've had a changeover from congressional rule to home rule, and then, of course, you have a city with a black mayor and a black city council, and I would say that the process of selecting teachers would reflect these factors. Things are happening in the Washington schools that provide some hope that there will be improvement in public education of blacks. But if you asked me whether Washington's school system is a showcase, something of which we can be very proud, even if we're not sure if the results are going to succeed; that we are making an effort that is proportionate to the problem, I would say absolutely not.

I think that part of the problem in all these cities is that the black middle-class today does not send its children to public schools; they are being avoided. People, black or white or Hispanic, do move their own. They seek what's best for their own children individually, and part of what they believe is best for their children is to have other children around them who will not be a danger to them, who won't take up a disproportionate amount of the teachers' or the class' time with things that are not educational, and—to move from the negative to the positive—they want their children sitting next to children who will be a valuable part of their child's educational experience. So you're left, essentially, with public schools in big cities that lack a political constituency that is very powerful or influential.

So I would say that at least a large part of what now stands in the way of improving our cities' schools is really a combination of both political and educational philosophy. Once upon a time we were able

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to set up a Stuyvesant High School in New York City, or a Townsend Harris, or a High School of Music and Art, or a Dunbar in Washington, D.C. Now, what's happened, of course, is that we've managed to hold on to some of the schools that were created a long time ago, but it's practically inconceivable that any city today could create a school that said it was selective on the basis of excellence. You can mask it; you can say you are setting up a school for people who are interested in writing or in journalism or almost any other thing, but if you said that you were going to set up a school in which the students would be selected on the basis of being able to read well, write well, know mathematics, and that they would not be retained there if they presented any kind of behavior problem, you would be accused of setting up an elitist school, of depriving all the other children of this educational experience. The next thing you'd probably want to do is to move some outstanding teachers to teach these children, and deprive all the other children of these teachers. Now, of course, the net effect of what is happening today is that the children who have these skills *aren't* kept in public school or in those cities; they either move out to the suburbs or are sent to private schools. And you find that many of those who want to become teachers because they want to teach Shakespeare or Dickens or calculus in high school, either don't go into teaching at all or go to private schools where, by the way, they are willing to accept much less money and security and fringe benefits because they want the enjoyment that comes from doing what it is they wanted to do.

Obviously there *is* a choice for those parents whose children make it into those few selective public schools. They don't have to move; they don't have to seek a private school. The situation changes, though, at different levels. Basically, elementary schools are smaller, and therefore are still zoned, neighborhood schools, and it is possible by living in the "right" place to select the school that you want and to know that your child is going to go there. At the high-school level it is possible, through the examination process, for your child to get into those selective schools. However, the junior high schools are not like that; they are all large enough so that the parent doesn't have those options. So, you frequently have a pattern of a parent living in a certain neighborhood and sending a child to a neighborhood elementary school, then either moving out of the city or sending the child to a private junior high school, and then trying to get him into one of the specialized high schools. I think that one of the things that we should have learned from this—but it is very rarely said because it's not the liberal thing to say, it's not a thing that's in accord with

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our values—is that the American people cannot be *compelled* to move their children for purposes other than what they want them moving for, which is a better education. Even when you are not dealing with integration, you're dealing with class differences among children in a city like Washington. Or it could be the class differences that exist in the suburbs: it is a fact that people move from poor, working-class, white suburbs over to the next suburb, which is a middle-class suburb, as soon as they have the money. And they do it, for the most part, not because the house is better, or the real estate is better, but because they're buying an education for their children. Public education *is* privately bought, in a sense. It's bought with where you buy your house and where you pay your taxes.

This doesn't mean there aren't perfectly good city public schools. In New York, for example, there are some very good high schools. They're not Dunbars in the sense of being selective in terms of intellectual excellence, but there are a number of schools that have a very high attendance rate, a very low dropout rate, that do a much better job than most of giving the students skills, whether or not they end up going on to higher education or getting a job. That is quite the opposite of the pattern. If you consider that about 40 percent of New York City's high-school students drop out, and that the attendance record overall in our high schools may be 60 percent a day, you've got a system that's in very, very great trouble. So, you need to point to schools that may not be models of intellectual excellence, but are doing a good job in terms of keeping the students, teaching them quite a bit, getting them eventually into college, or into a job. There's no question that the people who raise the issue of elitist schools are sensitive to the fact that part of the environment of all children consists of what is going on around them in the school. Let's take a high school that's not an elite school but neither is it at the bottom; it has a range: let's say that one-tenth of its classes are strongly academically talented classes, a quarter of the school is in bad shape, and the rest is in the middle. It's a school that has a top end but is skewed toward dropouts and low achievers, and so forth. Now, the existence of that talented 10 percent will mean that some really good teachers who have one class like that a day will stay, and will be available for the other four classes. Remember also that those advanced classes and students are mixing, perhaps not with those on the *very* bottom rung, but with the ones who are low achievers but want to try. The achievers have an effect on those kids. Some of those other kids are pulled over into the achieving lanes by being friends with, being in a club with, walking or riding to and from school with

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those students. It's very complicated. The educators say that the bright kids don't lose anything by being in a place like that. I personally don't believe it. I think that if these bright kids were surrounded by a lot of other bright kids, that they would be getting something. But there's also no question that if you took these bright kids out of that school, the other kids would be losing.

Businessmen frequently say to me, "Suppose we give you a mathematician or a scientist and send him in as a volunteer teacher in a school, would that bother you?" And they think I'm going to say, "Yes, because he's not a certified teacher, or he's not a member of the union," or something like that. That's not my response at all. With a shortage of math and science teachers, I would love to have people come and teach these subjects. But the question I always ask them is, "Is your mathematician from IBM going to come in and teach the only group of talented kids who are in that school, taking that satisfaction away from the one or two first-rate teachers who are there? Or are they willing to teach those kids who are still counting on their fingers in high school, or who can't read or write, or . . ." And I never get an offer when I raise this question. I never get the offer, "Yes, we will come in . . ." By the way, I think if a firm would just agree to take the same *proportion* of those kids as the regular teachers do, that would be a fair offer. But, I've never had that. They just hem and haw, and that's it. That ends the offer. It's especially interesting, because that same business will spend a summer cooperating with us by providing a certain number of jobs for unemployed youth, seeking out the very group of kids who *could* have been helped three or four years before that. They will wait until these kids have failed, and then extend a helping hand for a little while. It really is unfortunate that businesses do not involve themselves in the earlier stages of education, because to have them in the schools for even a short period would not only have an impact on the school, it would have an effect on the political values of this country. This is one of the reasons I have pushed for this Talented Teacher Act, the notion that we would get people in the top 10 percent of their colleges to teach in the public schools for five or six years in exchange for their college education. Not only would our schools have top teachers for five or six years but I think in the future we would have corporate executives and political leaders who had spent five years in the school system, and therefore had a type of understanding—more than understanding, a sympathy—that doesn't now exist.

Again, the biggest payoff in terms of intervening is in the primary school, in the earliest grades. I think that if you have a child who's

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been through kindergarten, first, second, third grade—I might include fourth but not for most kids—and if by that time the child can't read, write, or count, then I think you have a situation similar to getting *any* of us to do something that we have tried for four years to do, have been told, "you can do it, you can do it," and are aware that almost everybody else around us is succeeding and we aren't. I know what happens to me. I stop trying, or I turn around and say, "I can't do it, and I don't want to do it," or, "I'm no good at it." That clearly is what happens. Now what we do in school, what we do in the system, is I think quite idiotic: we don't do enough to reach the kids in the first place. And it is clear that an investment in those early grades—even on an almost daily basis, to have high school kids available as tutors or whatever—will make sure that children don't fall behind. This type of investment is also very inexpensive. Now, after that there's a point where it's too late. I can no longer turn around and say, "Johnny, this year I know you're going to make it," because Johnny himself doesn't believe it anymore. I think what kids at this stage need is some sort of a second chance. We need an institution that doesn't look like a school-with-a-teacher-with-books.

One time in another life I was a Boy Scout leader. I became a Boy Scout leader because it was well worth doing. All the leaders were drafted, and maybe because I was over six feet tall, I was told that "even though you're only fourteen you're the leader." There, I had quite a few kids who hadn't learned how to read or how to count in school, but they wanted to pass map-making, and they wanted to be second-class and first-class scouts, and pass merit badges. So they learned how to use a compass, and they learned to count, and they learned to read—but they would not have done that in school. And I'm sure people learned in the army, and in the navy, and in all sorts of places for all sorts of reasons. I think that we ought to do everything that we possibly can to make school a successful experience for kids by educating them right and by educating them early. But if we don't, and if we fail, then we need a new institution that looks sufficiently different even though it is holding out the same goals for kids. I have great doubts that you can take a kid who is sixteen years old and who, from the time he was in fourth grade, has said, "This is not the place for me, and I hate it," and make him want to learn. Just think of sitting still and relatively quiet for six hours a day. How many adults can do that? It's one thing if you're succeeding in getting something out of it, and something else if you're just absolutely lost. Or if, by the time you're sixteen you've got reading materials that are still on the third-grade level because those are the

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skills you have. I don't see any point in bringing the IBM mathematicians or scientists into a room like that. I think they would say, "What are we spending our money for?" I might bring them in and hope that they reach the same conclusion that I do, and that together we could begin to turn the institution around. That would be different, but that wouldn't be the purpose of bringing them in to *teach* there. It would be more of a political, broadly educational purpose.

I have raised the possibility of this new type of educational institution with business people, I've raised it with education people. I usually get a nod of agreement and then the subject is dropped. It's just too big. It would mean creating a different institution for millions of youngsters. Now, people have created new institutions for the very toughest kids, things like alternative schools. But many of these things that are called "alternative schools" are really ways of removing certain children who are problems from the normal institution. You can't legally expel them, so you say, "Well, we're going to give you an experience that is different." This is done only for a very small number of special problem students. The fact is, that it's easier to say to the child, "Let's try again," using the same methods: the school's there, the classroom's there, the teachers are there. It's very difficult to create something that's brand new, and I think that until somebody exerts the energy and effort needed to do it, it's going to remain in the realm of thought. This is unfortunate, because it is very obvious, I think, to everybody who has had anything to do with schools, that if you have a child who is really still a total failure academically at the age of ten, the chances of really turning that kid around in junior high school or high school or by any remedial type of experience that we've been using all these years are very close to zero. And yet we continue trying to do it.

There is a fundamental belief many people hold that they won't admit—as a matter of fact, they'd probably say the very opposite. The failure to bring about these institutional changes is probably due to a widespread assertion that any child can be changed, every child can learn. But there is another, very deeply imbedded, traditional belief that goes back to the pre-progressive education ideology, which holds that learning is up to the kids and their families, and that school doesn't do much, or can't do much. The *popular* thing to say publicly, though, is that the child is infinitely malleable and influenced by all sorts of things. I think that this is an egalitarian thing that people are voicing because they feel it *necessary* to say, the *right* thing to say. But deep down, people still feel, "Well, that's the home he

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came from, that's the family, that's his intelligence, or lack of it. It's not worth my monkeying around, there's not much I can do about it." So, your notion of the good kid and the bad kid, the smart kid, the stupid kid, etc., lives on, and is not talked about; it is the wrong thing to say.

There is a very interesting new study, "Changed Lives," a report on the Perry Preschool Project in Ypsilanti, Michigan, that shows very dramatically the effects of preschool education. Years ago I spoke to a group of businessmen. I said, "It's too damned bad that the educators and fuzzy-headed people like myself tell you that if you invest it's going to pay off, and the hard-headed guys say 'show me the facts.' " I had always wanted a real super-Scrooge type of guy, somebody who hates kids and hates people, to come in and to do some hard study that ends up with specific dollars and cents—all he'd be interested in is the dollars. And here for the first time this is done. It's a small study but it looks as if it's done quite well. The children were tracked for sixteen years. It shows that an investment of about $4,800 a year over two years in the education of three- and four-year-olds actually saved the school system money because those in the program required far less remediation later than did those in the control group. If this is true, it should affect our thinking about how to avoid having to have massive remedial programs in later years. Maybe we should conclude from this that there should be high-quality preschool programs for poor, minority youngsters. But there's a problem with that: you are not going to have a political base to keep such a program. Either to get it or to keep it. All our experience seems to show that if you don't give these programs to the middle class, nobody's going to protect them. This raises the uncomfortable question as to whether, if you do give it to the middle class, you're really helping the minority kids catch up; or whether, instead, *all* the kids are going to move up and the minorities will still be behind. Or, if this were targeted to blacks and poor people, would putting in kids who are advantaged mean that the program would not work because the poorer kids would be intimidated? These are fascinating questions.

Let's consider realistically for a moment what would happen if we decided to invest seriously in three- and four-year-olds. Well, the first thing you're going to have is Al Shanker saying that the programs ought to be sponsored and run by the public schools, especially given that so many daycare centers are scandal-ridden and some are actually harmful. Then you're going to have various community groups saying, "Hey, this is our job-bag and we do it very well. Just

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because a few places haven't worked doesn't mean we can't handle it. The public schools are failing; why should we give them another job when they can't do well at the job they're already doing?" Then the private sector is going to come in and say, "What are you going to do—set up yet another public establishment? We have such centers, we run them. Why not give vouchers to these kids? That way poor kids can use vouchers, the middle-class kids can pay their own way—they're already paying their own way. Why not have a profit set-up? Why have the type of monopoly that you've got in public schools with their rigid certification standards?" Should there be standards? You're going to spark one hell of a debate. This whole fight took place once before and nobody wants to touch it again. In 1972, the legislature passed the Child and Family Services Bill, sponsored by Mondale. It was vetoed by Nixon. After that, the biggest pile of mail that senators ever got was from the right wing, saying that government wanted to take the little children away from them and start indoctrinating them.

But I would say that one of the main reasons that nobody enters into this thing is that the education people, the child-care people, anti-poverty groups, minority groups, etc.—whoever comes out for the idea-in-general—all *say* it's a fine idea. But each group has its turf to protect, and each will raise objections, as I've said, to the others. A governor or legislative leader who supports one of them will make a lot of enemies. If you were really serious about this, a governor would have to call in the daycare community, the teachers unions, the school boards, and say: "I'm not going to go for this unless you people are together. Can you work out this thing? If not, it's not going anywhere. I think it's a good thing—the research shows that—and I'm willing to do it, but I'm not willing to stick my neck out acting as a mediator."

As things stand now, we have a "recall" or remedial attitude about education, but no intelligent, strategic ways of intervening. What we need to do is to take the research on early childhood, give our strongest possible support to those years when children still have confidence in themselves and don't believe that they're miles behind, or that they're failures. Then, if that doesn't work, we need to have a set of alternative institutions that have the same educational purposes as our existing schools but give the child new hope and a new willingness to enter into the process. I'd go a step further than that and say we *should* have had this all along: we give criminals second chances but you take a kid who dropped out of high school and leaves our school system and goes out to work for a number of

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years, and his ability to reenter at some later point is, with the exception of the GI bill, almost non-existent. The GI bill, by the way, worked, it worked well, and we should have learned something there. But we didn't. We never said: here are a whole bunch of dropouts, kids who didn't do that well in school and later on, but they've matured and realized what education means. And they came back. *That* is the sort of intervention we could use today.

Albert Shanker is president of the American Federation of Teachers based in Washington, D.C., and the United Federation of Teachers based in New York City.

* * *

Shirley Williams

We parents, teachers, and administrators used to know whom we were educating, when and where we were educating them, and what we were educating for. We are now uncertain about all three. Traditional education presumes that knowledge about the past and present will be useful in the future. But if the future resembles the present little and the past less, projections from them are bad guides. We may respond by saying that education is about teaching people how to find out information, how to *become* knowledgeable rather than how to *be* knowledgeable. But that begs questions about motivation. Those who know a lot develop an appetite, indeed a craving, to learn more; but not those who know little. There's another nasty question too: for what purpose do we learn? Most people learn in order to work better and to live better. If there is no work, what, they will ask, is the point of learning? It is no surprise to find that educational standards are often abysmal in inner-city schools in the United States or Britain. It is in those same localities that youth unemployment in the last five years has exceeded 40 percent. The punks with their bondage chains and blood-red cox-combs, the black kids with bomber jackets, beads, and badges are saying the same thing: "Look, take notice of me, I exist." But conventional society does not want to take notice. Only violence still

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has the capacity to shock it into activity. But when there *are* jobs for youngsters graduating, the motivation to study returns. The Boston Compact encourages youngsters to graduate from high school because private industry has pledged over four hundred jobs. "Youthemploy" in Brixton places 80 percent of its students, black and white alike; there are now waiting lists for the course.

Education in Britain, as in most other European countries, was for centuries the province of an elite. It was an elite of scholars, rather than an aristocracy or a plutocracy, because it evolved from the Church's schools and seminaries which in late medieval times were open to the children of fairly humble homes. It was only later on, after the English Civil War, that the famous public schools and Oxbridge became the province of the rich. The history of the last hundred years in education has been the reversion from aristocracy back to meritocracy, coupled with the higher basic level of literacy required by industrialization. But whom shall we educate in the age of information? The critical areas of competition between nations will lie in the quality and use of software. Because microelectronics is capable of being applied to all goods and services, the extent of its use will not be determined by its technical relevance, but by awareness of its potential. The educational level of the working population is therefore likely to determine the speed and extent of the adoption of information technology.

The English-speaking countries have been much more neglectful of human capital, of the need to develop the capacities of their people, than have the Germans or the Japanese. Industrial relations structures, often adversarial, encouraged and were encouraged by Taylorism, the reduction of the worker's role to simple, repetitive tasks. Management and engineering schools treated the substitution of capital for labor, replacing a man with a machine, as the definition of economic progress. Vocational education was looked down on and split off from academic education, the most renowned of which was revealingly described as education in the humanities. In the German-speaking countries, the tradition of apprenticeship dating back to the medieval guilds has been maintained in an efficient and modernized system. In Britain, its status was never as high; in the United States, the apprenticeship system only took root in the construction trades. The educational/vocational division is made nonsense of by modern technology. The architect using computer-aided graphics is at once an artist and an engineer. The doctor, lawyer, or literary critic unable to use a computer will be intellectually crippled in a way that is untrue of the professor of classics who cannot mend a pipe or a plug.

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Early specialization, of which my own country is the most extreme example, is intellectual Taylorism, no longer appropriate, if it ever was, to an age in which those societies will benefit most where information flows freely among traditional disciplines. Robots and computer systems can be designed to enrich work, allowing greater autonomy to individuals; or they can fragment it further, de-skilling those tasks humans still have to do. The choice may be determined by the quality of the workforce and the nature of industrial relations, whether they are harmonious or antagonistic. Either way, the choice is likely to seem justified in retrospect. Countries with low general standards of education will choose centralized systems in which control rests with management; countries with high general standards will prefer more centralized systems in which individuals can exercise discretion.

When do we educate people? The answer used to be that we educated our children, and that initial education saw them through four or five decades of adulthood, complemented by what we rather coyly called "The University of Life." The assumption made some sense in a society that was slow to change, where the world fifty years on was not too different from the world now. Yet almost imperceptibly, educational resources have been shifted towards in-service training, upgrading, and retraining in belated recognition that one skill or qualification is no longer likely to serve for a lifetime. The buzz words—continuing education, paid education leave, sabbaticals for blue-collar and white-collar workers—herald a revolution in which education, work, and leisure will be interwoven throughout a lifetime, following one another in succession from youth to old age. And that raises the question of *where* education takes place. The classroom may remain for young children, more as a place for caring than for teaching, but what will matter will be learning spaces. Video recordings of the best teachers and lecturers combined with individual learning packages will break the institutional link between education and school, just as Britain's Open University "distance learning" broke the institutional link between university and campus. The poor or indifferent teacher will not be able to hide within the sanctity of four walls, for comparison with the best will be so readily available.

But teachers will not become redundant. The evidence from inner-city training courses for high-school dropouts is the same as for Oxbridge: personal tuition makes a big difference. Britain's collegiate universities have among the lowest wastage rates of any in the world, almost certainly because of the pastoral care and counseling offered

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by tutors. Wastage rates among black youngsters studying basic information technology in Brixton tumbled when each was assigned his or her own tutor who continued to take an interest for a year or more after the end of the course. The Open University ascribes its record of getting undergraduates through a degree course, a grueling business for someone in full-time employment, to the network of local tutors who correct and comment on students' work and meet them face to face on several occasions each year.

What do we teach? A core curriculum of four or five subjects including mathematics and use of English up to the age of eighteen, together with a science subject and another language; the use of microcomputers as tools in all these subjects, not just in mathematics. Graduation should depend on mastery of subject, not age. Students undertaking vocational options would hopefully study in the same institutions as those choosing academic options, as in the English tertiary (ages sixteen through eighteen) college.

How would teachers fare in such a framework? They would be of high quality (because of the use of long-distance learning) and would be better paid. Some of their pay might be in the form of a merit award, dependent on keeping abreast of the subject through in-service courses, and on the judgment of peer groups and the assessments of students. Tutoring and counseling will be as important as classroom teaching and lecturing, indeed more so. The Japanese, be it noted, have a rather traditional, if highly competitive, educational system not unlike those of Britain and France, indeed much more similar to those than to that of the United States. The differences lie in the status of teachers, who are well-paid and well-regarded, and the passionate involvement of parents in an educational system that will determine their child's career possibilities. The quality of primary-school teaching in Japan is not unrelated to the snailspeed of female liberation. Schoolteaching, as in the nineteenth-century United States, is a respectable profession for intelligent women, and there aren't many other options open to them. In the United States, yesterday's schoolmarms are today's executives and lawyers.

To raise the educational standards of a generation—and we must—means a classroom without walls; not *extra-mural* but *non-*mural. The teacher/taught relationship will turn into mutual learning. And it will be very, very exciting.

Rt. Hon. Shirley Williams is president of the Social Democratic Party and former secretary of state for education and science in Great Britain.

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Joseph S. Murphy

I recently read an article in the *New York Times* about the difficulties that divorced parents are having in underwriting the college education of their children. In order to emphasize the magnitude of the problem they face, a problem shared by those who are married and operate middle-class homes, the reporter gives the cost of education. The range runs from an average of $4,700 a year for students attending public institutions to $8,700 a year for students attending private institutions. The problem was posed exclusively for middle-class parents. The assumption today is that one sign of being middle class is sending your child away from home at the age of eighteen. Why New York parents would send their child, at substantial financial expense, to Plattsburg for culture escapes me completely. I don't know of *anybody* who would go to Plattsburg for culture or anybody who imagines for a moment that life in a dormitory can be described as enhancing at even the most prestigious of universities. Nevertheless, it is assumed that if you're middle class, one of the things you do is send your child away from home.

The article made the assumption that the child would go away from home to school without questioning it, without being conscious about it. The truth is, that the problem as it is now perceived is how to use higher education as a vehicle for purchasing some assurance that your child will not be subjected to downward social mobility. This is a middle-class problem, and it is perceived as such because it is the middle class that's being squeezed when it comes to finding jobs, which in America bring status, affluence, and class; which mean all those things at once. Success requires that one have an education of a certain kind. And, today more than ever before, this calls for a particular kind of institution: the institution should have a middle-class membership; the institution should not be in an urban or quasi-urban setting where one's children may be going to school with black, Hispanic, and other minority children; finally, the institution should allow one's children to meet and marry people whose parents are sufficiently affluent to send them to the same school one has chosen.

Who, then, should complain? The same people who accept the fact that their teenagers cannot find work, that their hospitals are getting worse and worse, that their transportation system is in a condition of

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complete and utter decay. People who use cabs do not notice these things. All aspects of public life have been deteriorating and degenerating as part of an overall social policy largely preoccupied with increasing profits. One of the ways to increase the economic recovery that we strive for is to decrease the wage bill. That is now a national phenomenon and it is clearly at the cost of the public weal. All aspects of public life are deteriorating—particularly, public higher education. If there is no outcry, it is because the people most severely deprived as a consequence of this diminished investment in public services are the least affluent, are those with the least amount of power, and today, apparently, are those most reticent about expressing anger, rage, disappointment. Every index we have suggests that whatever social progress this country has made in bringing minorities into higher education in larger and more substantial numbers and providing the support services that they require, is receding. This includes everything from the number of minority physicians, which has gone down, to the number of applications to private schools by minority students, which has decreased in one year, according to the *Chronicle of Higher Education,* by 39 percent. So, it is not unnatural that the most articulate complaints come from middle-class people who are clinging tenaciously to the lowest rungs of middle-class respectability. Working-class and minority people are saying nothing—which is not to say that they aren't feeling something. And the fact that we're not sensitive to their silence is, in my opinion, extremely ominous.

This is not to say that some people haven't made the effort. I noticed in the last two state budgets, including the most recent one, which was introduced by Governor Cuomo, that a serious effort was made to reallocate dollars, transferring them from richer to poorer school districts. Still, out of a budget of $3.5 billion for the New York City school system—a substantial piece of change—only $21 million was earmarked for the dropout problem, the figures for which range anywhere from 40-60 percent, depending on whom you talk to. To lose one out of every two students before the end of high school must be perceived as a tragedy not only for individuals but for society at large. So, though an effort has been made, it has insufficient support to make an impact, insufficient support even in our own Democratic party, the party I identify with largely, although not always, and sometimes unhappily.

You ask me about the New York City schools. The surprising thing about the public-school system here is that it has always been somewhat more rigorous and less subject to the tides of revision that occur elsewhere from time to time. Take grade inflation, for example.

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There has been very little grade inflation here. You may recall that grade inflation was at its zenith during the time when instructors felt that to flunk a student or to give him a low grade could mean that he would be drafted. I suppose that it was the only time in any culture when flunking a course could lead you to an early grave. Still, grade inflation was more of a national phenomenon than it was a local happening. New York City school systems have always been much better in terms of the quality of teachers and curricula than most other school systems. What has not gotten better, what has gotten worse, is the size of classes, the size of schools. That's where our problems begin. I think it was still the case twenty years ago that people went into teaching—as I went into teaching—because they thought it was an important and noble profession. For a large number who went into teaching in the 1950s, teaching led to upward mobility. My sense is that many who went in with those expectations gradually became embittered. The constant need to seek out other ways of supplementing or augmenting income—it was never quite enough to live on—created problems. Also, gradually, as the Sputnik fever diminished, the respect for teachers diminished as well. The post-World-War-II baby boom put an enormous strain on the available resources. This is not to say there are not substantial numbers of teachers wholly committed to teaching. I gave the commencement address this year at the Bronx High School of Science, and from the principal emeritus to the principal, to the teachers and advisers, there was certainly a keen sense of esprit and commitment.

To answer why people today are going into teaching, I expect they think that jobs are going to be available. And for many of them, they will be. We've emphasized the shortage of mathematics and science teachers, and we're going to see many students going into these areas. Students are attuned these days to the relationship between education, profession, and job; as soon as they sense a job opportunity, they'll seize it.

I am often asked whether a significant increase in salary would make a difference in the quality of the people attracted to teaching. There is certainly no direct one-to-one relationship between money and quality. What money will do, however, is generate a pool that is larger, so that school districts, colleges, and universities will have a larger group to draw from. Today we can hire Ivy League Ph.D.s of first rank as assistant professors at $20,000 or $22,000 a year at The City University of New York. We, at least, have a union contract which prevents what are, I think, more outrageous examples of

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exploitation. Many distinguished private institutions, some located not too far from here, pay horrendously low salaries to people, exploiting the market. If the demand increases and the pool is enlarged, there will be a larger selection of people to draw from, and the quality is likely to improve.

I think the real issue today is the decline in status of teachers. Teachers used to be authority figures; they were men and women to be emulated. Teaching was, for them, a full-time profession. Classes were small. When you had twenty or twenty-two children in a class and you told them to write three essays a week, they learned how to write because they couldn't get away *without* learning how to write. There was no way to escape; what they wrote was read, commented on, perhaps ridiculed, almost certainly rewritten. And that's how one learned to write. If, on the other hand, today a teacher has two or three children at home to support, and her salary doesn't cover certain expenses, she is out selling shoes or selling Avon door-to-door, or doing whatever teachers do to supplement their income. When they have forty students in class, there is no time to read what's written. Students will not learn how to write, and the teacher will be showing films because there isn't time to prepare classes. The quality of education will suffer. Schools have to be smaller; the classes have to be smaller. It should not be necessary for teachers to have more than one job when they're teaching.

How do you give teachers new status? Well, in America status more often than not comes with dollars. Yet there are professions for which status is independent of income. Judges in our society have a good deal more status than they have money, for example. They have more status than criminal lawyers, who may get five or ten times the income. The status of a physician teaching at a medical school is very high although his income may be modest relative to that of a Park Avenue practitioner. So, I don't think it's just money. What eroded the status of teachers was that larger and larger numbers of people became educated, and as a result, no longer respected teachers. When I was young, parents respected teachers because the parents themselves had no education. As soon as people get a great deal of education, they look down their noses at the teacher who is less well-educated; their children may also come to have less regard for the teacher.

Once the teaching pool is enlarged, you're going to be able to hire larger numbers of people who have already done some graduate work, or, hopefully, have more in the way of a liberal-arts background. If you pay enough money, and if they have more in the way

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of education, they are going to have more status. And if they have more status, people are going to respect them more; teachers are not going to be put in the position of being babysitters, dregs who cannot aspire to anything grander than teaching. Licensing, by the way, is not in my view a sound method for establishing competence in a particular profession; it is simply a way for a profession to control its numbers. If you had a national examination for teachers, for example, and you flunked half of all the candidates, you'd immediately be able to increase the salary of those who passed, particularly if you created a teacher shortage as was the case with lawyers and doctors.

Let's look at what has worked. What has worked is the quality of teaching in private schools as opposed to the quality of teaching in public schools. Although I'm persuaded, for example, that the quality of teaching in many private schools, particularly parochial schools, is not as good as in some public schools, particularly in metropolitan areas. When we send our children off to some of these fancy secondary schools here in New York, we're buying better instruction. There's no question about it. But it may not be so much instruction as class. We're buying what people buy when they send their kids off to whatever our Harrows and Etons are; we buy teachers who have a certain demeanor, a certain accent, certain mannerisms, certain taste, certain sensibilities, certain civilities, all of which are representative of membership in a certain class. And since our children all imitate, they ape those mannerisms; they have an opportunity to pass into or appear to belong to that class, from clothes to accent. That's what's bought.

Remember what's happening in New York City. It is literally turning into a brown city. We're going to be mono-racial someday, I suspect, because the very concept of white and black doesn't make much sense. It never did here. I'll give you an example: I have a new, distinguished president of one of my colleges who was dean of a school of social work in Washington. He came to me and said "I just don't understand why there isn't more of a sense of generosity in the white population here about creating opportunities for blacks, as now exists in Washington." My answer was, "The first thing you have to learn is that you do not have white and black in New York. You have black, and then you have Irish, Italian, Jewish, Hispanic, Asian; you don't have white." And if you watch our children in third grade being taken en masse to the U.N. or to the Metropolitan Museum of Art or to the Museum of Natural History, and you look at them, you realize that you don't know what they are. There are all kinds of faces. I cannot tell you anymore what they are, how to

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describe them. Washington is different from this place. Washington's schools—at least in the years I lived there—were filled with the children of blacks, many of them middle-class blacks. There was, through the 1960s and 1970s, a large black middle class. You will find in New York, I think, a much larger number of very poor black and Hispanic children, together with larger numbers of black children whose parents have made it. They have a substantially larger income than any earned by a GS-14.

I'm not going to enumerate the hundred and fifty different efforts that we in the City University here have made to be involved in some way or another in the city's schools. But I can name some. There is a high school in LaGuardia run by a community college, consisting of students who cannot get in unless they have been identified by two people as potential dropouts. It has a 95 percent graduation record. But the key to that high school—the teachers are regular teachers—is that is has just four hundred students. Size is terribly important. Am I against the idea of a longer school year? A longer school day? It's a trivial, mechanical response, understandable to the readers of the *New York Post*. I have never thought—being a Luddite at heart, ever since Frank Manuel made me read about Ludd—that anything from computers to overhead projectors to language labs meant diddly-winks. I don't believe in them.

When I was in Ethiopia, I had six hundred Peace Corps teachers working with me. They were enormously successful by any standard. And prior to that, I ran a Peace Corps training center on St. Croix that most of the teachers going to West Africa went through. I am persuaded that you cannot manage to survive in a foreign culture unless you are open enough to be able to absorb pieces of that culture without being obsessively judgmental, being a moral absolutist about it. There's no question in my mind that there ought to be some kind of psychological device for at least screening out those who are by nature and temperament not capable of having a relationship with a younger person that doesn't entail domination, patronization, condescension. That's the worst quality, it seems to me, in teaching. What our kids, especially our city kids, need is the sense that this teacher may be the only person they have encountered in their lives who really cares about them. For many of our kids, severely damaged by the circumstances of their lives, no one has ever cared about them in any sense of the word. The attachment to a teacher gets to be enormously important because it stimulates the sense of emulation, the sense of wanting to prove something to an adult—all those things that any creature does in order to elicit love from another creature.

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Consider a mother's love. On the one hand it's extraordinarily demanding; on the other hand it's very secure. I had a conversation with the admissions director of Putney School the other day. She is an extremely intelligent woman. She dwelled on the difference between coercion, on the one hand, and creating an environment in which you can demand something of someone and find that they're responsive to it. We have a far too coercive environment in many city schools. To give an example that Tony Alvarado gave me the other day; he said, "Look, in most schools in this town, if the kid is absent four days in a row and comes in on the fifth, the teacher or counselor will say, 'What the hell are you doing here? Where the hell have you been for the past four days? What the hell do you think this is? What do you think we're running here?' " Another kind of response would be, "Tony, what happened to you? We haven't seen you for four days. It's great to see that you're back."

You have some very fine new schools, and when one of these places is completed it usually maintains itself for a while. But the city has been very stingy about the maintenance of a lot of these schools. Let's face it; construction fuels politics. So construction is a big item in any administration. If you build a building, that's an important thing to do. It creates jobs, unions are happy, contractors are happy, money flows, political parties flourish, incumbents get reelected. The maintenance of a building is a different story. That involves nothing quite so grand; it's a small union job. It doesn't generate much money. And so it's easier and more practical to build a new high school. We've built some very fine high schools in this town.

But what about the teachers? Obviously, what we've done in the past doesn't work; the creation of teachers, of professors of education, has been a disaster. It's been a disaster for a very long time. Nothing is new in this regard. What we fail to do is to attract and hold good people. I'm convinced that we drive away potentially terrific teachers the first day they walk into a pedagogy classroom. The quality of the instruction, the intellect of the professor, the quality of the textbooks, is so ridiculously low that anybody with imagination or intelligence simply tunes out. The last time I said this publicly my remarks hit fifty-five newspapers, none in New York—and I didn't get a postcard. When someone asked me what ought to be done I said, close down the teachers colleges right away. That would be a tremendous contribution. We can take a BA in sociology, a BA in history, a BA in mathematics, a BA in physics and make a teacher in three months. A better teacher than anyone who comes out of a school of pedagogy. We know it can be done and we did it in the

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Peace Corps. We did it by the tens and tens of thousands. We had people who were avid to teach. We were not given to abstract psychological theorizing; we were not trying to make them education specialists; we were instructing them in how to teach specific things, the English language, among other subjects. The old Peace Corps training manuals are very interesting, but I do not know of any school system in this country that is using them today. Not a one. Everyone, all across the country, was very anxious to have our teachers when they came back but this experience is forgotten. The first thing we did with a Peace Corps teacher was to put him in the schools; within three weeks he was in a school. What happens there is far more important than what happens in a teachers' college. In the developing countries, you send the teacher into the marketplace, he finds out what language is being spoken, who the mother of the child is, what she sells, for how much, and where she gets it. He learns how she perceives her child, his past, her past, his future, the family's status in the society, the language they use, the religion they practice, the values they have, their hopes and expectations for the child. He learns more in that marketplace than he is likely to learn in any class of pedagogy. You have got to find analogues for that in the city. It is not easy. Still, in New York it's less of a problem, because many of our teachers, coming out of colleges like Queens, Hunter, City, or Brooklyn, introspect; they already know the homes of their children because many of them are not far removed from the same kind of home. But ask yourself the question: how do you take someone who is white, middle-class, from middle America, and turn that individual into a teacher in an urban ghetto or in a Caribbean schoolroom? How do you do that? These men and women can't be obliged to introspect because there is nothing in their life history or experience that sets off those alarms of identification that are necessary to establish a relationship with a kid.

I've known teachers who have gone to children's homes to meet the parents. I know a teacher who runs a school in Queens. It's a privately run school, but it's like a parent-teacher co-op, and it's all minority. During the course of the year she has visited the parents in the homes of each of these children, maybe thirty or forty of them. Her perception of her kids, their lifestyles, their physical surroundings, the extraordinary complexity of their home situations, is terrific.

There is a conventional picture of the black apartment in Harlem, of the Hispanic household, that's changing very rapidly now. At one of our City University Colleges, for example, the vast majority of students are women. Most of them have children and most of them

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are the sole support of those children. A large percentage of them are on welfare. Those who do have jobs have relatively menial jobs; they're looking to improve their life. Now we're talking about a small college, three thousand students in the middle of Bedford-Stuyvesant. But when you watch these women relate to their children in the daycare center there, you are reminded of Italian mothers, Jewish mothers, Irish mothers, for whom the education of their children was the salvation of their own lives. There is more and more of that.

New York ended up with such a large black and Hispanic population because it offered jobs. The reason blacks and Hispanics came here is because the chamber of commerce advertised on billboards all over the South and in Puerto Rico for cheap labor to come here to work in our textile factories and our small electronics companies. And then, when they unionized, became a little bit more aggressive and assertive, the factories picked up and moved back to the South and to Puerto Rico, leaving us—including those blacks and Hispanics left behind—with the problem that this town has always had, the effluvia of industrialization. And then we blamed the victims. The interesting thing—the pervasive myth of this culture—is that if you work hard you're going to make it. If you didn't make it, you didn't work hard enough. It's not astonishing to me to sit in Queens and listen to Geraldine Ferraro say, "This is the party of the people who want to work."

This society is simply not taking account of millions of people who are, in a sense, being shovelled out into it to do very, very little or nothing. To be taken care of, most inadequately, by public authority. Every culture has had that effluvia, but it is extremely dangerous. What is going to happen to all these people to whom we have pretended to give an education, when in reality we've given them relatively little? Will they wake up to that fact? The assumption is made that there's a relationship between education and employment. If jobs exist, they will be filled. If the jobs aren't there, than no matter how much education we give these people, they are going to be on the streets. And if they end up on the streets, it will be up to us to tell them why.

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Frank: In New York City, we consistently use the results of the "More Effective Schools" research in our technical assistance plans. One of the most significant findings, not surprisingly, was that the expectations of educators affect how well their students learn. We are not just paying lip service to the belief that all children can learn effectively; we are acting on it. Our mission is to create a climate in which that learning can occur. Parental involvement is another important factor influencing student achievement. We work closely with parent associations to encourage parent participation and our staff development brings the same message to our teachers and supervisors. We also believe that schools in which the principal is an instructional leader, involved in the newest curriculum innovations, and not just an administrator, are more effective schools. Workshops for principals are designed to highlight the changes in curriculum and methods of instruction, so that they are better prepared to be instructional leaders. And finally, the research has shown that ongoing assessment is an equally important key to improved student learning.

Because we know that all students can learn, we strongly support the evaluation of educational programs. It is only through applying the results of our assessments that instruction can be modified and focused on meeting students' most critical learning needs. The New York State Department of Education administers statewide tests at several different grade levels beginning with grade three and continuing throughout high school. These tests assess reading, mathematics, and writing skills. Students cannot graduate from high school without having passed competency tests in these areas. New York also grants a diploma to certain students who have taken and passed the rigorous Regents examinations in many subject areas. In addition to the state tests, New York City administers citywide tests in reading and mathematics. The mathematics tests are customized to measure specific curriculum objectives at every level. The development of customized tests in reading and language arts is now in process as are tests in other selected subject areas to aid in assessing instructional needs across the curriculum.

We know that science literacy is vitally important in today's technologically oriented world. For that reason, several years ago we

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started to design science tests to be administered citywide at grades five and eight. The purpose of these tests, which were administered in the spring of 1984, was not primarily to yield information on the performance of individual students, but to provide information concerning the citywide level of students' achievement in science: their knowledge of curriculum content as well as the process skills of investigation, application, and interpretation of scientific information. It is only when the level of knowledge and process are identified that curriculum and instruction can be adapted to promote student learning.

For the past three years, the New York City Council and the comptroller have given the New York City schools increasingly significant sums of money to train math and science teachers and supervisors. The first year, we received a million dollars; the second year, we were given two million. This year, the sum is five million dollars, and it may increase. Even before all the commission reports lamenting the state of mathematics and science education, we had instituted staff development sessions. We had also developed a recertification program to retrain teachers who are presently teaching "out of license," providing them with the necessary background to teach effectively in subject areas new to them. As part of our summer staff development, one of our high schools was transformed into a college. Over a thousand pedagogues came to take science and mathematics courses, learned how to use scientific and technical materials, discussed new findings, and reviewed research techniques. Supervisors were involved in leadership seminars in these critical areas.

A major problem in education is attracting teachers, and one reason for this is the pay scale: we cannot attract mathematics teachers at the salaries currently established. But the other aspect of the problem hinges on the way that the public views our profession. No one wants to sit in a living room trying to justify being in education when someone is asking in an incredulous tone: "But why are you teaching?"

Kominski: In regard to the students' experience in ninth grade, the various commission reports hardly discourage us. On the contrary, we are encouraged. Given what is said in the reports and what we know about our own progress, we know we must be doing something right. We analyze ourselves constantly. For example, we started to revise ninth-grade general science three years ago. It had been separated into four discrete subjects (biology, chemistry, physics, and

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earth/space sciences), categories that were meaningless to the students. Our problems with general science were compounded by the fact that many of the teachers teaching grade nine had not originally chosen to become science teachers. Our concept in planning the new science curriculum was: let us assume that students come with some life experience of science through reading, entertainment, study, or even individual research. Let us make certain that the youngsters who pass through this grade have what we call the basic science skills: the ability to measure, to formulate questions, to design an experiment, to think in what we used to call "scientific method." Essentially, we want to equip the youngster—and the teacher, for that matter—with skills and basic background information in science; but, more important, with a feeling of confidence so that he will feel, when he arrives at sophisticated science subjects, more comfortable getting into research and problem-solving.

So, our ninth-grade science curriculum, which is being field-tested now, is a response to this concept. Grade nine is going to make it or break it, is going to tell whether or not we can successfully motivate students to learn more about the sciences and develop the skills that will equip them to be good citizens, decision-makers, and consumers, regardless of whether or not they ever get a paycheck for being a scientist or a technician.

Frank: Now our best science teachers are offering the new ninth-grade science course. Our staff development for science supervisors shows them how to organize their departments so that there is staff rotation, a sharing of the wealth. It is interesting to note that New York City has many more Westinghouse Science winners than any other city—even more than the state of California. And I would like to explode the myth that our outstanding science programs are only in the more well-known, specialized, science high schools such as Stuyvesant High School, Bronx High School of Science, and Brooklyn Technical High School. New York City has excellent science programs in high schools throughout the city. Part of our staff and curriculum development has focused on helping schools that already have outstanding science research programs to expand these programs and to share their success with other schools. We have assistant principals and science teachers who really give of themselves to nurture science interests. High-school supervisors frequently visit junior high schools to help coordinate programs and offer technical services.

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Kominski: The state has always looked to us to see what we are doing in science. They are now developing their science curriculum and are using, as a model, much of the work that we have done since 1968.

Frank: The commission reports that indict our system, that accuse our teachers of didacticism, that dwell so much on evidence of passive learning in our students, misconstrue the problem. They do not know what has gone on in many of our teacher training institutions. I am tired of listening to representatives of higher education indict public-school teachers. Who trained those teachers? In some cases, the same colleges and universities that are now doing the indicting. There isn't a single school principal who doesn't know the sinking feeling of "I have a whole group of new teachers; I'm now going to have to train them." We in the public schools have been too ready to shoulder blame and too passive to demand what we need from the institutions of higher education that prepare teachers and supervisors. We, the public schools, are the clients and must assume more responsibility for insuring that our needs are met. We are now doing so by becoming active partners with these teacher-training institutions.

Our staff development is based on the transfer of new techniques and skills from those who are knowledgeable to those who need help. In turn, those who have been trained are expected to return to their districts or schools and to help others. In order for a teacher who has participated in our staff development to return to his or her school and pass on the skills and knowledge gained, two very important elements have to be present: first, a colleague in the school must want to form a partnership with the newly trained teacher; second, a supervisor must support that learning partnership. New skills and new learning have to be nurtured or they will be lost. It's only common sense.

Kominski: I think a good example of this is the evidence that comes from the coordinators in my discipline, science. Their role is to provide support, but they need support also. Those teachers who are doing a good job are not just closing the classroom door and doing their teaching within a vacuum. They feel they are part of the system—maybe not the massive, citywide system—but within their community they know that they have colleagues across the hall, across the street, who are doing the same kind of things, facing the same kinds of problems as they are. I work in a discipline that has always had well-coordinated professional organizations. For ex-

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ample, for twenty-two years we have had a New York City Elementary School Science Association that supports many of our efforts.

I think we have to look differently at various levels of schooling. In the high schools, by and large, we have licensed teachers, men and women who to some degree are in love with their subject. They are getting something special out of it. They love questing for information, working with youngsters, seeing the youngsters develop. The tools of their trade have a greater value and significance to them than they do to those in the junior high schools, who may be teaching science, but whose training may have been originally in social studies. As we move down the grades, to elementary schools, we find the teachers who have had the least amount of formal preparation. They lack not only background information in science, but also familiarity with methods. They are not comfortable with the basic biology in the curriculum and there is great misunderstanding of the value of science materials, of even the simplest, most easily available materials. Part of our role in professional development is to take the materials we recommend and actually to put them into the hands of teachers.

Frank: The Bay Area Writing Project, which served as the basis for rethinking how writing should be taught, required that teachers themselves write. Teachers were obliged to organize, revise, and edit. In the same way, teachers who want to teach science and don't know how to do so have to be taken through a training program that gives them the chance to practice new skills. Improving science education is not a different process from improving writing skills.

Kominski: Biology, of course, will always entail a large element of memorization, identifying systems, and so on. Yet in biology, as in all of the sciences, there are opportunities for students to take the information and see how it applies to their daily life, to decision-making about personal hygiene, nutrition, and so on. "How can I use this information now? What of this information will be valuable to me three years, fifteen years, up the road?" One of the reasons biology has always been attractive to students is that it seems to be closest to their own experiences. Also, we're more prepared now in terms of laboratory supplies and teachers trained in biology. We wouldn't find as many teachers trained in the physical sciences or in the earth sciences, fields for which a mathematics background is required. Also, I would say that those teachers who can master chemistry, mathematics, and physics will probably find jobs elsewhere.

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Frank: What we want to do is to create a profession that is respected because of its importance. We want to attract able, committed people, not just because they're altruistic, but because education will provide them with the joys and lifestyle to which they are entitled. We need to let people know the great pleasures of teaching. At each stage of growth, young people have new lives—and we as teachers give them the knowledge and the help they need to make the most of those lives. I often use an analogy to plants. Just as we nurture plants to grow and to thrive, teachers have the opportunity to work with young people and watch interests emerge and a sense of responsibility develop. At the end of the semester, after the students have gone, a teacher can close the door and say, "I have helped mold that group of students to be better people, to be better able to help themselves, and also to be able to work for society as a whole." I hope that in the future teachers can also say, "And I have done this without having to moonlight at three other jobs."

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* * *

John Brademas

A good deal of what I say will obviously be inspired by my own experience as a legislator. I am not among those who assert that everything we attempted to do and did do in writing the Great Society programs was a mistake, and I certainly am not prepared to say that what we did has been without positive effect. In fact, I think one of the great needs right now, from the viewpoint of both scholarship and public policy, is careful, hard-headed, honest analysis of the impact of those programs since their inception. Let me first talk about several ways of supporting education that I think are appropriate to the federal government. You have asked me, for example, about educational research. That is one area where there *is* a unique

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responsibility for the national government. Why? Because you're not likely to find state and local governments that have the financial resources necessary to support educational research—or even to perceive it as the kind of commitment they should undertake.

Now, I became a vigorous champion of the National Institute of Education, which is the principal federal agency supporting research in education, when it was proposed by somebody for whom I found it easy to suppress my enthusiasm, President Richard Nixon. The NIE was, in fact, Pat Moynihan's idea when Pat was in the Nixon White House. When Nixon suggested the institute in his education message to Congress in 1970, I thought it a splendid initiative and immediately told the appropriate officials of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, "I want that bill in my subcommittee. I'll handle it, push it, and pass it." And we did.

Educational research, I must tell you, is not, in commanding the attention of elected politicians, the most exhilarating of subjects. Politicians don't see the relationship between research and educational outcomes. But eventually my colleagues on the Select Education Subcommittee, which I chaired, became interested, and in 1972 Congress passed the legislation that created the NIE. One of the points the report made was that we should not look upon research in education as an assembly-line operation for manufactured products. We should not, as it were, put the money in the slot of basic research on Monday and then expect the applied research to tumble out on Tuesday, and the next day ship a box off to the school systems and say, "Go to it." There has to be a dynamic relationship between the schools and the researchers, a mutuality, an interchange. Second, because we're dealing with human behavior, we should not expect overnight results from such research. To learn from educational research takes time, and it should not be simplistically analogized to research in the natural sciences.

You ask why the National Institute of Education has not been as useful as it might have been. One reason, frankly, is that Senator Warren Magnuson, who was then Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, was hostile to educational research. Although both he and I were Democrats and although there was strong bipartisan support for this legislation—Albert Quie, Republican Congressman from Minnesota, was my principal co-sponsor—that made no difference to Magnuson. I think he may have felt we were being somewhat dilettantish in our concern with research about education.

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We made the point, however, that we earmarked for research and development a substantial percentage of the annual federal budgets for defense, agriculture, and health. Yet when it came to education, which has such an enormous impact on our society, the country wasn't spending the small amount it would take to get some thoughtful, objective, scientific, analytical evidence on what was effective and what wasn't. We made a powerful case for the legislation, but others did not agree. In addition, when the NIE started, it suffered from some shaky leadership. All in all, then, this first major effort to make a commitment to research about how people teach and learn had a difficult time of it.

Let me reiterate that I believe that we, as legislators, did our homework effectively and wrote a first-class piece of legislation. I'm perfectly willing today to defend it intellectually as the right thing to have done. Inadequate funds, hostility from key legislative leaders, and weak leadership of the NIE in the executive branch: these factors make it not surprising that the institute has not been as productive as its authors wanted. In subsequent years, including those of the present administration, the NIE has had its ups and downs in the caliber of its directors. I think Secretary of Education Terrel Bell understands the importance of educational research, and I would give him high marks as a protector of it, but he has had to fight off the right-wing ideologues in the Reagan administration who have wanted to utilize the institute as a political weapon rather than as an agency dedicated to increasing our knowledge about learning and teaching. Still, I believe—as does the Reagan administration's own National Commission on Excellence in Education—that support of educational research remains an important obligation of the federal government.

A second area of appropriate federal concern is to assure at least a degree of attention to groups of learners in the society who are otherwise going to be ignored. One example with which I am very familiar is the education of handicapped children. When, as chairman of the Select Education Subcommittee of the House Committee on Education and Labor, I started looking at this problem, my colleagues and I learned that there were millions of handicapped American children of school age who were either receiving an inadequate education or none whatsoever, and we determined to do something about this. We did. We wrote PL 94-142, the Education of All Handicapped Children Act. Although you don't hear as many complaints about this statute in 1984 as you did a few years ago, it has, I'm aware, distressed a number of state and local governmental

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officials because it contains a mandate for them to provide a free, appropriate education for handicapped children. The fact is that at the time we in Congress wrote that law, forty-nine states already had their *own* mandates for the education of handicapped children—either by state statute, court order, or state constitutional requirement. But the states simply refused to enforce the provisions of their own laws.

So John Brademas didn't come along and say, "We feds intend to impose some onerous, horrendous mandate on you to do something you don't want to do." Rather, my principal House co-sponsor, Republican Al Quie, and I wrote a statute that gave states and local school systems additional resources to do that which they should have, by their own laws, been doing but were failing to do. I'm perfectly prepared to hear the case put by critics of the statute that it works hardship on state and local school systems by making demands on their resources that they can't handle. For example, here in New York City, there have been complaints in recent years about the impact of the education of handicapped children on scarce tax revenues, and I certainly don't want to be unreasonable about such concerns. But my attitude is, "If it's broke, let's fix it," rather than do away with the statute and run away from a serious problem.

Let me turn to another example of the same family of concerns to which the federal government must attend: socioeconomically disadvantaged children. I was a member of the subcommittee that wrote the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, Lyndon Johnson's proudest jewel, which among other matters provides school districts that have large numbers of low-income children federal funds to improve their education. The Reagan administration has mounted a sharp attack on this program, now called Chapter 1, not solely for budgetary reasons but for basically ideological ones. Mr. Reagan simply does not believe that the federal government has any business in education. Nearly a decade ago, Reagan even called for the abolition of the then U.S. Office of Education and said we should get rid of *all* forms of federal aid to education! In August of 1984, the Library of Congress (through its Congressional Research Service) published a study on the impact of ESEA Chapter 1 funds on learning outcomes. That study makes clear that it is simply false to suggest, as Ronald Reagan has repeatedly tried to do, that there is a direct correlation between declining SAT scores and rising federal expenditures on elementary and secondary education. Indeed, as this study points out, the pupils who take SAT tests are simply not the

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children who are the targets of and who benefit from Chapter 1 ESEA programs.

Why did we write Chapter 1 ESEA in the first place? When I went to Congress in 1959, state governments were not much interested in poor children, especially if they lived in cities or rural areas. In Indiana, for example, the state government was controlled by the Farm Bureau and the Chamber of Commerce, who couldn't care less about the needs of people in cities, whether for housing, health, or education. Yet many of us in Congress, and some presidents of the United States, perceived that there were indeed genuine needs to which state and city governments were simply not responding. So it was state and local inattention that caused us to say, "We're going to do something about such problems." And we did. The Library of Congress study I just mentioned makes clear that there has been a positive correlation between Chapter 1 ESEA and—specifically and especially—reading achievement on the part of students whose school districts received these funds. I repeat that a legitimate concern of the federal government is the education of children who are particularly vulnerable.

I also think there is a place for federal support of certain curricular programs in areas of critical national need. Here I go back to President Eisenhower's advocacy of the 1958 National Defense Education Act that provided federal funds to improve the teaching of science, mathematics, and modern foreign languages. Even Ronald Reagan this year called for $50 million to educate more teachers in science and mathematics, fields in which this country is experiencing a desperate shortage. With strong support from both Republicans and Democrats, Congress has just passed legislation to authorize $425 million annually to increase the supply of science and math teachers in elementary and high schools and to provide sabbaticals enabling teachers to take refresher courses. In fact, teacher-training is another area that requires some federal support because we're just not getting enough from the states. In my judgment, it is not enough to say, as Reagan blandly does, "Well, let the states do it." The states have *not* been doing it and the states are not going to do it. I realize that some states are improving somewhat—here I observe that Texas, one of the richest states in the Union, this year passed a bill to increase teachers' starting salaries from a current level of about $11,000 to $15,200, with a ceiling of about $26,000. Beyond teacher-training and curriculum development in fields regarded as critical, the federal government must continue to provide funds, as it now does, for financial aid for both undergraduate and graduate students.

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I find it ironic that the National Commission on Excellence in Education produced the report *A Nation At Risk,* which with respect to the role of the federal government in education, made recommendations that sound as if John Brademas had written them. I do not believe that Ronald Reagan has read the report. I say this because if you look at Reagan's rhetoric about education and his budgets for education, you will find that he has waged all-out war on every one of the recommendations for federal action put forth by the authors of the report, all of whom are members of a commission appointed by Reagan's own secretary of education.

Take a look at Ronald Reagan's program for education: elimination of the Department of Education; prayer in public schools; educational vouchers to encourage students to go to private schools; family educational allowances and tuition tax credits to help middle- and upper-income parents. Not a single one of these proposals is even mentioned, let alone endorsed, by Reagan's own commission. Beyond that, nearly every one of the reports on education that have come out in the last couple of years—and I think I've read most of them—has explicitly called for a significant role for the federal government in support of education. Let me give you an example: William T. Coleman, Jr., a Republican and former secretary of transportation in President Ford's administration, and Cecily Selby were co-chairmen of a study sponsored by the National Science Board, *Educating Americans for the 21st Century.* Their report is a study of the state of mathematics, science, and technology education in elementary and secondary schools in the United States. The Coleman-Selby Commission called for an expenditure of, as I remember, several billion dollars in federal monies over several years to improve education in these three fields, including the establishment of model elementary and secondary science and math schools. Where does President Reagan stand on the recommendations of this bipartisan commission?

The fact is that Mr. Reagan has paid little attention to these substantive reports on the problems of education. I'm sure that Terrel Bell, who's an intelligent man, cannot possibly in his heart of hearts agree with Reagan, and I am assuming that at least one of Bell's possible motivations in having had the Commission on Excellence created was to protect the continuing existence of the department of which he is secretary because everybody who follows these matters knows that Bell has not favored its elimination.

Now, I have said there is a federal role in support of education for research, special populations, student assistance, for curriculum and

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teacher training in areas regarded vital to the national interest. Let me make one other point. I draw to your attention that federal support of public elementary and secondary education in this country is, as a proportion of total expenditures, at present on the order of 6 or 7 percent. We are, therefore, not talking here about an enormous percentage of money or a tremendous aggrandizement by the national government of decision-making responsibility for schools. Nor am I for a moment asserting that we should take away state and local control of elementary and secondary schools in this country. Of course not. We're talking instead about what happens at the margins, which can be crucial because what is at stake is both equity and excellence. And I believe that you don't have to sacrifice one for the other.

I also believe there are appropriate ways in which the federal government should help the arts and humanities. I was author of the legislation that continued the authorization for the two endowments and that created the Institute for Museum Services, all three, federal agencies on which Mr. Reagan also waged war in his first budget. Indeed, he proposed the elimination of the Institute of Museum Services although part of its program was to encourage museums to work more closely with elementary and secondary schools. Fortunately, Democrats and Republicans in Congress joined hands to block the Reagan assault on the two endowments and the museum program.

Let me turn to another area of federal involvement—vocational education and other programs aimed at preparing people for jobs. When I was a young congressman, I was very critical of the vocational education program because of its overwhelming emphasis at that time on home economics and agricultural courses. I tried to make the point that there were some people in this country who did not live on farms, and that we needed to do a much more sophisticated job of tailoring vocational programs to the requirements of a scientific, technological economy. We still do.

In sum, I feel that we were on the right path in Congress in supporting these several federal education programs. In many respects they did not do everything we had hoped because we didn't infuse the provisions with enough resources, either financial or human, while in other respects they certainly have proved effective. So, as a matter of scientific fact, it's simply not accurate to say that they were properly tried and found wanting.

Funding is not the only issue over which there is great controversy. Clearly, there is ferment about teacher education in this country. I

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note, for example, that the Department of Education is going to undertake a study of it. I would support such an inquiry, although I have to be a little skeptical. I don't mean to sound partisan, but this administration has proved itself so bitterly hostile to schools—this is the most anti-education administration in the history of the country—that I am not sure we can expect more than rhetoric.

My mind goes back to the time I returned from Oxford to South Bend, Indiana, before I first ran for Congress and when I was trying to decide what to do in the interim. I went to the superintendent of the South Bend public schools and said, "I'd like to teach social studies." I was a graduate of Harvard, magna cum laude, with a B.A. in political science. I had a Ph.D. from Oxford in social studies. But I was not permitted to teach in the public schools because I had had no courses in pedagogy. Now you must understand that my late grandfather was a college professor and high-school superintendent and my mother taught in the public schools of Indiana and Michigan for nearly fifty years. So I come from a family of schoolteachers. Yet I never forgot that experience, and while I agree that teaching is a much more challenging and difficult art and science than the layman understands, I think there's a lot more to it than pedagogy. You've got to know your subject matter. So I applaud the rising expressions of concern in many of these recent reports that too many teachers are not getting a strong enough education in the subjects they're going to teach.

I would also say that bright students can survive poor teachers in colleges and universities because there the students have books and other bright students, and they have themselves. But it is essential to have the best teachers, people who really know how to teach, in the earliest grades. So I certainly do not denigrate knowledge of how to teach. Let me say something else about teacher education. Recently I read a report on school reform that made the point that, conceptually, we think of schoolteaching as a profession but that in fact it too often operates more like a trade. That's a perceptive—and troubling—observation. Now, I agree with the common view that you can't solve problems by throwing money at them (though that attitude seems never to be applied to defense-department budgets), and, of course, I understand that you cannot reform American teacher-education simply with money. But it does seem to me obvious that we cannot attract the brightest young men and women to careers in public-school teaching if we continue to pay them $11,000, $12,000, $13,000 to start, and hold out the hope of $25,000 or even $30,000 as the *top* salary. It is noteworthy in this regard that Ernest

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Boyer (president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, and former U.S. Commissioner of Education), in his study of high schools called for a 25 percent increase in teachers' salaries and that the recent Rand study by Linda Darling-Hammond urged that teachers' salaries be raised to the range of $20,000 to $50,000.

These recommendations are highly significant because they appear at the same time that we hear predictions of a teacher shortage in this country within the next ten years or so. In some fields, such as science and math, there's already a shortage. Yet that there will be a demand for teachers does not mean that there will be an adequate supply. Graduates of New York University can become accountants at starting salaries of $19,000 to $20,000 a year. Why should they become schoolteachers? Now, I am not saying that the federal government should supply the money for boosting teachers' salaries to such levels. In the first place, with Mr. Reagan's $200 billion deficit extending as far as the eye can see, Congress will not support such expenditures. It's not in the cards. This means the states are going to have to act.

I'm glad to say that some states have demonstrated strong leadership here. I think especially of Governor William Winter of Mississippi, who this past year proposed and won acceptance of a significant increase in money for his state's public schools. I take my hat off to him; that was politically very courageous. In other states we've seen similar initiatives. I must tell you, however, that we have a long way to go before we make the quantum leap in providing adequate teachers' salaries, which is essential, in my judgment, if we want to attract first-class people to the teaching profession. Yet having said this, I think that attracting able people to careers as schoolteachers will take more than salaries. Universities like mine also have to do their part. One of the things we're doing at NYU, for instance, is providing some generous scholarships to young men and women who make a commitment to teaching in the public schools for a certain period. This is analagous to the bill the House of Representatives recently passed providing scholarships for young people throughout the nation who want to be teachers.

I believe the business community must also step up with money and other forms of recognition, and should work with universities to help us do a better job of attracting bright young people to teaching. In fact, I have just received a check from the Xerox Corporation that will help New York University retrain science and mathematics teachers whose licenses have expired because they left the classroom for business. Certainly, New York State desperately needs science

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and math teachers. As I read what is said by some of the leaders of the National Education Association (NEA) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), I also sense a new willingness on the part of the two principal organizations that represent teachers to respond constructively to some of the criticisms of teachers and of teacher education. The big exception, of course, is the NEA on the merit-pay issue. I must tell you that I'm open-minded on the question, but if anybody tries to tell me that merit pay is going to solve the problems of public elementary and secondary education in the United States, I remain highly skeptical. You cannot tell me that giving a schoolteacher who earns $15,000 to $20,000 a year, an extra $2,000 or $3,000 or $4,000, is going to make that much difference. The merit-pay idea is a sort of appeal to the work ethic that has an attractive political color to it, and I think that Al Shanker, president of the AFT, is probably correct in handling merit pay by saying, in effect, "Look, I really don't think this is going to make a lot of difference, but if it makes you feel better, I'm not going to fight about it."

When we speak about education we're clearly talking about values and when we talk about resources, and their allocation, we're talking about politics. Values, resources, politics—all these considerations are inextricably bound up in any discussion of education.

For example: when I pick up the *New York Times* and read three front-page stories on the lack of child daycare facilities in the United States and see a similar cover story in *Newsweek* and when I watch national television reports on child abuse in this country, I find my thoughts going back a decade. In 1971, a senator from Minnesota named Walter F. Mondale and a congressman from Indiana named John Brademas wrote what was called "The Comprehensive Child Development Bill." This was the first major attempt on the part of the national government to provide, on a wholly voluntary basis, opportunities for early childhood services. Both the House and Senate passed the bill, and we sent it to the president, Richard Nixon. But on the eve of his departure to the People's Republic of China, Nixon vetoed it. In one of the most irresponsible and demagogic veto messages ever delivered by an American president, Nixon alleged that we were trying, as it were, to collectivize the American family. He imputed to the bill's sponsors communist motivations; it was standard Nixonian rhetoric.

In 1975, Mondale and I rewrote our bill, renaming it the "Child and Family Services Bill" in order to make explicit that our purpose was to assist children and to reinforce the family as the basic unit in

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American life. We held hearings on the legislation. And then in the summer of 1975, Mondale and I, at breakfast in the Capitol in the Senate Family Dining Room, agreed that if we pressed ahead with the bill in that session, President Ford would also veto it and thereby seriously set back our effort. So we quietly decided to postpone action in 1975 in the hope that a Democrat would be elected to the White House in 1976.

What happened next was remarkable, and not, I think, unrelated to where we are nearly a decade later. First there appeared a rivulet, and then a niagara, of letters, delivered by mailsacks, to the offices of congressmen and senators, all of them attacking the Mondale-Brademas Child and Family Services Bill. One group of writers said we were trying to nazify the American family, other groups said we were trying to communize it. The charges were, of course, untrue—and, at any rate, we had already decided, as I have said, not to seek to advance the bill.

Now we come to the political situation today. Reagan is trying to change the agenda. He wants to take the minds of the American people off the substantive, tough, difficult, concrete, nitty-gritty issues of how we can have good schools. He's turning aside the real agenda by holding out the tantalizing bait of school prayer, tuition tax credits, vouchers, educational savings allowances, and elimination of the Department of Education. Not one of Reagan's proposals is on all fours with the leitmotivs that run through the whole army of reports published in the last two years on how to improve our schools. Reagan is saying that a chocolate bar is good for you but the reports are saying that an apple a day is what's needed. Values alone are not enough, because resources must implement values or we have only sound and fury, signifying nothing. Reagan has pretended to give us a value statement by sending a teacher to space, but he does not want to put any money into the schools. The fact is that Mr. Reagan shows little appreciation of the place of our schools and of education generally in American society. You recall, for instance, that on his recent visit to a school in Washington, D.C., that had no library, he said in effect, "Well, we didn't have any libraries when *I* was in school, but look what happened to me." By the power of his example he is saying that you don't need books and you don't need libraries to succeed in American life. That is a dangerous message for an American president to send.

Let me talk a little about the politics of education. It is passing strange that, on the one hand, Ronald Reagan could have been so effective in drawing the nation's attention to the importance of

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education while, on the other hand, in his budgets and his rhetoric he pursues courses of action that have the effect of undermining the American public-school system and the colleges and universities of the United States.

In his first year in office, Reagan won his big legislative victories: huge increases in defense spending, massive tax reductions and substantial cuts in domestic programs. But the gain of twenty-six seats by the Democrats in the 1982 elections broke Reagan's ideological majority in the House. At the same time in the Senate, men like Robert Stafford, Republican of Vermont, and Lowell Weicker, Republican of Connecticut, began to say to the president, "No! We've had enough. We're not going to weaken or kill these education measures." There followed a revival of the bipartisan coalition for federal support for education that had characterized almost all my time in Congress.

You must understand that Ronald Reagan is the first president of modern times to have attacked education. I served in Congress with six presidents: three Republicans—Eisenhower, Nixon, and Ford; and three Democrats—Kennedy, Johnson, and Carter. Every one of them signed laws for federal support for education, and in some cases, including the Republicans, initiated them. Reagan's budget, therefore, marks a sea change in the attitude of an American president toward the role of the federal government in education. I don't think the American people realize that.

In my first months at New York University, I joined several other university presidents to call on the junior United States senator from New York, Alfonse D'Amato, who is very conservative. In his Washington office was also the young man who headed the human resources division, including education, of the Office of Management and Budget under David Stockman. D'Amato sharply rebuked this young man, whose name I forget: "Listen," said the senator. "I am more Reagan than Reagan is Reagan, so don't try to talk to me as if I'm not a good conservative. But what are you people at OMB doing, trying to kill the Guaranteed Student Loan program? You're talking about *my* people, you're talking about the people who voted for Al D'Amato and Ronald Reagan! What are you trying to do?"

As we talk here just before the election, a crucial issue, in my opinion—and there is hard evidence to support what I'm about to say—is the prospect, if Reagan is re-elected, of an all-out assault on federal student financial aid. Why do I say this? OMB produces annually a five-year budget projection. If you look at the last such

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projection prepared by the Reagan administration, you will see that five years out, by 1989, student aid is earmarked for a reduction of one-third. That is a colossal cut. In my opinion, such a policy represents a dagger in the heart of the American national interest. If you look at other social programs, you see the same pattern. A victory in the upcoming election can, I believe, allow Reagan more freedom to be Reagan, which means that he will try to get the federal government out of all education programs. The question is whether Congress will be of like disposition. If a re-elected Reagan were to recover the ideological support in Congress that he had in his first two years in office, he would then be in good shape to carry through on his plans. If there were a substantial increase in the number of Republicans in the Senate, that would diminish the power of moderates like Weicker and Stafford and Dole. If the Republicans control the Senate by about the same margin they now have (fifty-five to forty-five), you might, ironically, find a Republican Senate not very supportive of Reagan. First, it would be loaded with candidates to succeed him, several of whom privately don't have much use for his views anyway. Such a Senate might well prove a major center of opposition generally to Reagan's domestic policies, and certainly in education.

Another point I want to touch on is a theme that characterized the work of the bipartisan National Commission on Student Financial Assistance, of which I was a member. I served as chairman of the Commission's Graduate Education Subcommittee which last December issued a report on that subject. All twelve members of the commission endorsed the report and our conclusions. What we said about graduate education is also true of elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education: namely, that investment in education is essential to the national security of the United States, from both a defense and a foreign-policy standpoint; to the economic strength of the country; and to the quality of American life. In my view, Reagan does not seem to understand these connections, that is, that when he attacks education, he is really attacking the security of the United States and the prospects for a strong and growing and competitive American economy. Even if you accept Reagan's own rhetoric and budget, you cannot embark on a "Star Wars" program or have a $300 billion annual military budget without trained and educated men and women. Where are these people to come from? Ronald Reagan does not seem to realize that when he attacks education he is attacking the security of our country and is making it more difficult for us to compete. The president doesn't seem to

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understand the implications of his war on education for our future as a nation.

John Brademas is president of New York University in New York City and was a congressman from Indiana from 1959-1981.

* * *

Kenneth B. Clark

I think that public education and its problems are probably the most important domestic problems of our time. I know that sounds platitudinous, except that I have to be honest with you. I must repeat that I believe that there is no more important domestic problem. Now, to go beyond the platitudes, why is this important matter given at best peripheral concern, with occasional reports, with some political officials coming out and saying that we have to improve the quality of our education, and then going on to more important things? Is it that the issues are too complicated?

I did a study at the request of AT&T about five years ago, and they probably published a summary of it in one of their house organs. They came to me with what I considered a pure research problem, which I didn't know why AT&T should be interested in. The problem they presented was what they called "the over-educated under-employed." I wondered why they were concerned about this. Their answer: "We find ourselves in a situation where we are increasing the educational requirements for jobs that really don't require that level of education." I agreed to study it. I discovered they were interested not only in the economic implications of the problem but also the political implications. They wanted to know how long this could continue before people got so frustrated, being required to have an A.B. degree for answering phones and doing such things, that trouble would follow. We did the study and found that their concerns were valid. The adding-machine approach to most jobs that required higher educational degrees made little sense. I coined the term "educational inflation." Now, that's one set of concerns, a very real one, that we are paying far too little attention to.

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When you look at our educational system, and I've been looking at it primarily in terms of our urban situation, concentrating on the inequities of public education in terms of race and class, I tend to concentrate on the urban education as it exists in the inner city. I accept that American public education has been successful in certain circumstances; the democratic approach to education has worked for many Americans. I find myself concentrating on those groups for whom it is not working. Why do we have such disturbing indications of its inadequacy and failure in our inner-city schools, generally controlled by individuals who have been beneficiaries of the system when it did work? That is a preoccupying issue for me. I think, constantly, "Oh, what short memories!" I am particularly disturbed when I hear second- or third-generation Americans tell me that blacks or Hispanics cannot learn, that they, as teachers, are doing the best that they can, and that the poor achievement level now common is the maximum of which these children are capable. I sometimes think, you know, that the educational system didn't work too well for them either, because it certainly didn't give them much of a sense of history. It didn't leave them with any sense of reality. They have forgotten their own past and that of their families. This may be another example, paradoxically, of success American-style. Success, blocking out the past, allows them to deal with the present in terms of their own present status, ignoring the process that produced the success. I find this disturbing.

I will confess to you that in all the work I've been doing in calling attention to the need for raising standards and the quality of public education, I have been surprised by the number of people—including some of my colleagues on the Board of Regents—who have told me to forget it: "Why," they ask, "are you always raising these issues? You are successful; if these other blacks had the pride, ambition, and family support you enjoyed, we would have no problem. We all individually raised ourselves by our bootstraps, our own bootstraps, and that's the issue." Therefore, it's not an educational problem, they say; it's a personal and family problem. And therefore we don't have to look at what we need to do or what there is about this educational system that determines the deficiencies you're pointing to. The deficiencies are not to be understood in terms of the inadequacies of the educational system. And I hear this so often.

What I see are the massive inadequacies of the present educational system that may in some measure be the consequence of the past success of that system. What I find difficult for others to understand is that no matter how hard I worked, or how motivated my mother

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was for me and for my sister, that if we did not have, in the schools we attended, teachers who motivated us, teachers who taught, teachers who had standards, teachers who did not at that time believe that we were uneducable, my life would have been wholly different. I remember the teachers who were significant in teaching me the importance and value of history. I remember my mathematics teacher in junior high school, who believed that we were capable of understanding mathematical concepts and who demanded that we demonstrate it to him. I remember Ms. McGuire, who taught English, who taught me in the eighth and ninth grade to respect the language, to understand its logic and grammar. And when I hear people tell me now that our children can't understand grammar, I'm bewildered. I know my own life history. My mother went to night school after working in a garment factory all day; she'd come home and fix dinner for my sister and me, and then go up to George Washington High School to learn as much as she could. I'm not saying that was not important. But what I'm trying to say is that something happened in the educational system that is not so subtle; we now have unstated caste distinctions with differential standards. Fortunately, when I was in elementary and junior high and high school in New York City, that was not true. The thing I remember, the thing I dream about now—and it is very difficult for my colleagues to understand me—is that those standards held up to me by my teachers were important in increasing my determination to achieve.

You ask why it is so difficult for them to understand this. In the 1940s, something happened to educational philosophy; under the guise of liberalism—compassion, if you prefer—educators became psychologists; they started talking about mental health, happiness, frustrations, and non-frustrations as major responsibilities of the educational system. This was the beginning of serious questions being asked about standards and methods, on the assumption that standards inevitably lead to frustration; the assumption being that the majority of youngsters could not meet the standards set and would therefore be frustrated. Failure was a very bad thing; it led to an internalizing of problems, a loss of self-esteem. You didn't have the old-style promotions any longer, since you didn't want to register adequacy or inadequacy. This was called compassion. What was not foreseen, however, was that compassion is a two-edged sword. As a result of this kind of destandardization, the whole educational process was changed. Education cannot exist without standards. If a teacher in an inner-city school ought not to correct grammar, should not be concerned with youngsters learning respect for their language,

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there is no more compelling reason for them to teach their students arithmetic. If children made errors, not knowing that two and two aren't six, or two and two must always be four, that was a small matter.

But this questioning of standards in the educational process, I believe, quite unintentionally resulted in an increase in social distance, particularly in racial distance. Middle-class white parents, while verbalizing and accepting this kind of permissive approach to education, had other goals and objectives for their children. In terms of mobility, college entrance examinations—SATs—were still realities for them. Their desire to have their children go on to college was not subordinated to the new permissive psychology; compensatory approaches were resorted to. It didn't matter whether Johnny could or could not spell; he was expected to meet certain standards in terms of educational mobility. For the poor working-class child, however, there was no alternative. Without standards, there was a steady deterioration of education, and it soon became institutionalized. Because what happened was that the teachers themselves didn't have the same sort of demands made upon them. When I was in school, teachers had requirements; they regularly prepared study, work plans. Later, everything became freer, more permissive. Once that became part of the educational process it was difficult to change. The teachers' organizations are not going to demand a serious evaluation of teachers' performances. Shanker is giving some signals that if salaries are increased, greater efficiency from teachers can be asked for. I don't believe that money is the principal issue. I think it's a problem of how to restructure and reorganize staffing responsibilities so that there is serious evaluation of teaching performance.

You say, quite correctly, that teachers in this city, like other civil servants, were recruited from particular ethnic groups. There weren't very many black teachers. That is no longer true. Today, in many instances, the teachers come from the same racial and ethnic backgrounds as their students. Why do they not become the most ardent advocates for the things I am arguing for? That question is very embarrassing. Until I had the experience of working on a book commissioned by the majority of the board of education in Washington, D.C., I must confess, my view of the problem we are discussing was very simplistic. I believed that because the educational establishment in New York City was controlled by whites, though the percentage of minority students, blacks and Hispanics was increasing at a tremendous rate, the whites who controlled the system were not being very responsive to the educational needs of these other

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groups; this, despite the fact that they themselves were second- or third-generation immigrants. This, I thought, was pure racism. Then I went to Washington, D.C., where the board was predominantly black, there was a black superintendent at the time, and the majority of the teachers were black. The resistance to my proposals was vehement! The superintendent said that I was seeking to impose middle-class standards, middle-class values on black children. There was elitism in the program. Also, said he, we could not use standardized tests to determine the efficiency of an educational system that was educating black children. The head of the union, a black man whose name I've blocked, appeared on television to debate with me. He said that if this program was implemented, and black children were taught to read, it would only increase their frustration because they would still be victims of racial discrimination. I heard him say this before the television camera; I just didn't believe what I was hearing. I cannot see why in a black-controlled educational system, the program was rebuffed.

I will say to you, however, that it taught me something. It taught me that my simplistic racial view of the resistance to teaching black children was just that, simplistic, and, in its own way, racist. I was confronted with blacks who were not as sophisticated as some whites with whom I was in conflict in New York City, and they came out in open, honest statements that revealed their own stereotyped notions about other blacks. And I looked at them—they were successful blacks who had lost any empathy for or identification with the masses of the black children in District schools—and they were racist. The teachers, who were black, were sending their own children to private schools or to those public schools that maintained the very standards they were resisting in their own schools. I had expected support from the well-educated blacks—in that city there were many—and they couldn't have cared less. Why? Because their children weren't affected. You have a precise parallel to the successful white middle-class, the upper-middle-class, whose children don't face these problems and are therefore not much concerned with it. But they are the decision makers, those who set the political and educational agenda.

Incidentally, the issue is not just race. In the village in which I live, have lived for the last thirty-five years, there are two groups, the white-collar executive-management educated group, and a working-class group that literally lives near the railroad. My late wife and I observed that the school system there—a very successful school system—had a large caste or class differential. Let me give you a small

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example. My daughter was very interested in math; for some reason, when she took the exam for advanced placement in math, she didn't do at all well. She was broken-hearted. She, by the way, told us the story. The teacher called her in and said, "Kate, you didn't do well on the advanced placement in math but we're going to put you in advanced placement because we know that your family wants you to go to college." Why did Kate tell us this story? Because she had a friend, Mike, who lived near the railroad tracks, took the same exam, probably did better than Kate, but was not put into advanced placement. Kate found this disturbing and told us the story. She also made clear that the guidance counselors in the high school separated these two types of kids regularly; students from working-class parents were, with few exceptions, directed toward the non-college curriculum. When we deal with race, we're dealing with the same phenomenon on a different scale. Teachers look at black children and automatically assume, with few exceptions, that there's no higher educational possibility for them.

You ask me what it would take for Washington, D.C., a preponderantly black city, to have a good public-school system. I'm embarrassed to tell you what it would take, because it's not a complex thing at all. It would probably take empathy. I remember my mother with her two small children. You know, when I hear this broken-home thing, and single-parent family refrain, I think of Miriam working in the garment district, though she was a union organizer, sacrificing to see that we were educated. I know what I'm saying sounds as if I'm on the side of those who say, "Look, let the family do it." What I'm really saying is, where the family doesn't, there ought to be surrogates who do. And an integral part of education is to set standards. Why does no black politician, no black representative, no prominent black in inner-city ghettos insist that this happen? For one thing, it isn't a glamorous issue. Everybody knows that the schools are there; if someone wants to take advantage of them, he or she will. There's access, and the budget is there; it is quite high. Teachers can negotiate their salaries. "The educational system is working as best it can," and where it isn't working, there are reports to recommend improvements—but no action.

We are in the midst of a presidential campaign. Neither side is going to address itself to what I consider this most important domestic problem. Why not? Because there must be an economy of effort. There is a limited amount of energy, time, and communication possibilities; the candidates select the issues they think will win votes.

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I am told that Mondale is very interested in education, but it does not seem to be a priority concern for him.

There are six hundred thousand blacks living in Harlem, but they themselves will not advocate major change. The schools, to the extent that they have become essentially custodial institutions, cater to the victims of inadequate education who are without power or incentive to change the schools. They're defeated, and their defeat started long ago. In Washington, the scene is different. Black civil servants, no longer the clerks of yesterday earning $5,000 a year, but bureaucrats earning $23,000 or more, together with their associates, are very concerned that special attention be given their children. There are one or two public schools that are known to be good; they're special for the middle-class parent. And, by the way, this is no secret. In other words, there are schools where, if you are a professor at Howard, your child is going to be taken care of. These don't provide status quite as high as that offered by Friends or St. Albans, because both of those are especially good. For a black family to send its children there indicates that you have really made it! The other black children are expendable. Not only are they expendable, but they are so for all the same reasons as certain white children are. Their families are not interested in education. They are thought to be culturally below the level where the educational system can do anything for them. Jesse Jackson made an effort with his Excel program, but never followed it up. There is a stultifying apathy concerning education in that segment of the black community. Their children are clearly the victims. I was disturbed by the fact that those families were so victimized, so depressed, that they had no energy to engage in a fight for their children. I was embarrassed, however, that my friends—many were my friends, middle-class, upper-middle-class blacks—couldn't have cared less. My allies were few; except for Anita Allen, who was chairman of the board of education at the time, who was concerned. And she was bludgeoned and defeated for her persistent concern. They closed in on her; she was a traitor to her class. Because Anita was trying to make a difference. Anita was the one who brought me in.

Let me tell two others stories. The first concerns the *Washington Post*. The editorial-page people were fairly negative. Interestingly enough, reporters who covered this story over a period of time were positive in their reports. I went down and had lunch with a number of editorial-board members, including Bradley, and they thought that the whole thing was idealistic, unreal. I was trying to reorganize the school system; it wouldn't work. I decided to call Kay Graham. I had

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served on the board of the University of Chicago with her; I thought I knew her. I said, "Kay, I'd like to talk with you about the negative editorials on the educational plan for Washington." She brushed me off, saying, "Kenneth, I do not like to interfere with the editorial department of the paper." I answered: "Look, you know there is such a gap between the editorial position and the news reporting—why?" Her response: "There's no point in our talking."

Let me tell you a tragic-comic story that concerns the board. The majority, you will recall, was black. Among them was a man whose father I had known when I was a student in college at Howard. His father had been an architect, a very successful man. And his son was now on the board of education, and was a vehement opponent of my plan. The main basis of his opposition to it was that it was elitist. He argued that I was seeking to have the Washington public-school system become a vehicle for having black kids reject their blackness by imitating whites. In an open meeting of the board of education he attacked me by saying that the plan involved teaching black children to speak English in a way that they didn't ordinarily speak. Their culture, he said, was one in which black English was the dominant means of communication; teachers should recognize this and teach in terms of their black idioms. While he was speaking, I thought of his father; I got angrier and angrier; I think it was the only time I ever interrupted a member of the board. I said: "Look at yourself and listen to yourself—excuse me, but I would like for the Washington public-school system to teach these black children to speak as well as you are speaking in your Harvard accent, so that they might get away with the nonsense you are getting away with by virtue of your speech." The board was aghast; the audience broke out laughing. Interestingly enough, it stopped him, because actually what this man was doing was using language and inflection to disguise his insensitivity, if not idiocy. I just felt that I had to say it to him.

One of the most interesting things that has happened is that the black community of this country, for the first time in its history, has come to control a large number of public educational systems, and isn't doing anything with them.

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Kinlow: I think what a newcomer would see, if he studied the Washington, D.C., school system for a while, would be a system that's in transition; one that's becoming pretty good. I think you could reach that conclusion by looking at the last two superintendents of schools, people who showed some strength, who happened to have been at the right place at the right time. Those would be the current superintendent, Floretta Mackenzie, and her predecessor, Vincent Reed. Reed instituted a number of reforms, among them something he called "Competency Based Curriculum," which had the effect of making a statement to the public that there was going to be a serious attempt to turn education around, to hold people accountable. This new curriculum put more emphasis on what was then termed "the basics"; it specified what we wanted taught at every grade level, applying, in the beginning, just to the elementary grades.

Another important thing that happened was the board of education's decision to outlaw the long-standing practice of social promotions. That really grabbed people's attention. It said, let's stop and take a look at what's going on here. One of the major reforms that stemmed from this was a student progress plan. It was started in 1980 as a performance-based system of promotions in grades one through six—nobody would be promoted until he or she had clearly demonstrated, usually through testing, the achievement of particular skills. That said a great deal to the community at that particular time. It began to restore people's confidence in the school system. The community started to stand up and say, "We want to put more money into public education because we're beginning to hear things we like, things we think will make a difference." As a result of that, we had for several years a fairly stable financial situation. Our budget still doesn't have enough money in it, but at least we are no longer impoverished. In the past, budgets would vacillate up and down. And you can't really run a school system very well if the funding is erratic.

In the first semester that we introduced what we call our student progress plan, we had to retain 32 percent of our students. Previously, when promotions or retentions were highly discretionary and double retentions were almost unheard of, the retentions were probably less than 10 percent. But now we're promoting again; we're

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up to 92 percent in the primary grades. We had to have a shakedown period. That period put a lot of pressure on everybody. It put pressure on principals, it put pressure on teachers. I never heard more teachers screaming than in the first two years that we instituted this program. But the parents really got on board and supported it. Our progress now has the mayor talking a different tune: he now says that next year his kid is going to go to a public school.

The situation in secondary schools is unfortunately still not nearly as good as it is at the elementary level. The problem with turning a school system around is that you have a pipeline effect. It's easier to fix what's wrong on the elementary setting because kids aren't as deficient. But one of the major problems of our secondary schools historically has been that we have dumped kids into the seventh grade who still had third- and fourth-grade-level skills, and below. It is really only possible to deliver sound secondary education once you have stopped promoting students who have serious deficiencies into secondary schools. We don't do that anymore, and that is a major intervention. But we're not just standing on the premise that if you stop putting academically deficient kids into secondary programs you will automatically eliminate the problems. We've also made a number of interventions directly into the secondary program. For example, four years ago we passed a board policy that required every graduating senior to have 20½ Carnegie units. We had been at 17½ ever since I can remember. Inherent in this change was an increase in math, science, and language requirements and a "cap" on electives.

We simultaneously established a checkpoint at grade eleven, a time when every student has to demonstrate a certain mastery of consumer, survival, and life skills. In other words, rather than just wait for our intervention at the elementary school level to creep up through all the grades, we decided we had to do some other things immediately. Eleventh-grade students who prove to be seriously deficient in skills are placed into a special regimen designed to bring them up to par as best we can before we move them on.

Boggs: These were all reforms in the right direction, but there are other fundamental questions that I think have a great deal to do with the future of public education in Washington. Many of these have to do with money. We have to deal with the legacy of an eroded financial base of the school system which is, in part, the result of the flight of the middle class from the public schools. By the late 1970s, we probably had the poorest school system in the United States—if

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you compare Washington, D.C., with other states. The only state that has a higher percentage of students from low-income homes is the state of Mississippi. Even though the District of Columbia is probably the second wealthiest "state" in America in terms of per-capita income, it has the highest percentage of poor children. There is an enormous disparity between the pupil population and the population as a whole. We also have one of the lowest percentages of adults that have children of school age. So the District of Columbia has very limited leverage in dealing with public-education issues. This was felt particularly keenly in 1980, when seven hundred teaching positions out of a little over six thousand, approximately 9 percent of the teaching force in the District of Columbia, were eliminated in one fell swoop. That was a traumatic blow to the school system. It had a ripple effect throughout school after school where very good teachers were leaving. In fact, all teachers with less than ten years of seniority faced the elimination of their jobs.

One unanticipated benefit from this disruption, though, was that parents became galvanized to an extent that we had never seen before. They formed an organization called Parents United for the D.C. Public Schools to keep the issues of public education, both policy and financial issues, uppermost in the minds of Washington, D.C., politicians. Several thousand parents rallied before the city council and demonstrated against the cutbacks. They testified before their council representatives and carried their demands to the mayor and media. What resulted was a much closer alliance between the parents and children from lower-income neighborhoods and middle-income parents and children. We saw minority parents and the small number of white parents who still send their children to the public schools coming together.

I think this outpouring of parental concern was in large part attributable to the dramatic nature of the cuts that had taken place. It was also related to the fact that for a couple of years before the cuts, there had been an effort to encourage parents from lower-income neighborhoods to take a greater interest in their local schools. For example, in 1978 and 1979 the Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights instituted a program that asked lawyers from major law firms to volunteer to act as counsel to the parents in about fourteen schools in the Anacosta region of the city. The lawyers agreed to help parents address problems at the local school level: a stop sign that wasn't in place, books that weren't being delivered, dangerous playground equipment that needed to be removed, building repairs that had to be made; a host of questions of that sort. By 1980,

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Anacosta parents were meeting regularly with their lawyers and beginning to get impressive results at the local school level. The existence of the network of parents connected to the Lawyer's Committee project enabled schools from all parts of the city, predominantly black in most cases, white in others, to cross geographical and economic barriers and come together. You could say that the public-education project of the Lawyers' Committee happened to be at the right place at the right time. Today, there are probably as many as sixty or seventy schools that have a membership affiliation with Parents United, either directly, contributing a certain amount of money to the organization, or indirectly, sending representatives to meetings.

There has been another outgrowth of lawyer involvement that is beginning to have a major impact on our schools. Four years ago, the Lawyers' Committee project helped to establish a special foundation—the Washington Parent Group Fund—to provide corporate funding to match parent fundraising at low-income-area schools. The funds provided would be used to support special enrichment programs that were not available as part of the regular school program. The project, which is now active in over thirty schools, has had a tremendous impact. It has provided schools with programs worth over $100,000, and parent participation in school affairs is way up.

If I were to try to summarize the agenda for our schools in 1980, I would say that our first and foremost challenge was to insure financial stability and to restore cuts. Progress on this agenda has been made: classroom size has been reduced; student/teacher ratios have been improved; pre-kindergarten programs that had previously been cut significantly have been restored. As progress became apparent, Parents United began to address other fundamental issues in the system, such as the development of new procedures for the evaluation of teachers. It began to advocate tougher standards for teacher certification and re-certification. In 1982, I believe it was, it drew up a list of positions to be taken on the negotiations being held between the board of education and the teachers union. Parents United was working for these reforms well before any of the national task forces had come out in favor of tying teacher promotions to some form of evaluation, or of linking pay to performance. It called for longer school days and a longer school year. In other words, Parents United looked forward. And by announcing publicly a position that represented the interests of students and parents while the board and the union were at loggerheads, it influenced the media in the city, particularly the *Washington Post,* which subsequently editorialized

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in favor of exactly those things Parents United had been advocating. The final result was an agreement, reached at the eleventh hour, that incorporated many of the Parents United positions. I don't think there is anyone who now doubts that the intervention of parents, with the help of lawyers reviewing their documents, really had a great deal to do with the fact that an agreement was reached incorporating many of the reforms later recommended by the national studies.

I should say a few words about one of the Parents United recommendations, that for more stringent teacher certification. Teacher certification is an extremely complicated matter. One of the criticisms that Parents United raised two years ago and continues to raise, and which I know many members of the board of education would immediately echo, is that we do have to increase significantly the teacher certification standards in the District of Columbia. We have relatively low standards. The task force recently appointed by the superintendent to review merit pay concluded this past summer that standards should be raised substantially.

Kinlow: There's been a lot of movement on a number of fronts and a good part of this is tied up in labor/management relations and negotiations. That is one of the reasons changes seem to take so long. But you also have to realize, when discussing certification, that our school system, like most school systems, is shrinking in enrollment and therefore shrinking in the number of teachers. There hasn't been a need to hire new teachers for quite a few years, so from a standpoint of what was most urgent in terms of new initiatives and new policies, establishing an improved system of new-teacher certification was more a back-burner than a front-burner issue. The more relevant issue was what to do with teachers already on board, teachers who have put in fifteen years of service and are probably going to work another fifteen years. That was the really pressing issue. We did a number of things: for example, we require all teachers to come up for review every five years. We require teachers to take a minimum number of courses. We require that teachers demonstrate computer literacy. We are addressing new-teacher certification in the context of a teacher-incentive program that we are developing. We hope to produce a comprehensive teacher-incentive program that includes career ladders, master teachers, entrance certification requirements, testing requirements—the whole thing.

Boggs: It's important to emphasize two things here. The first is that urban school systems must be assured of an adequate and stable

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financial base. There simply must be adequate money in the system to prevent the kind of attrition of personnel or loss of vital programs that devastated our system as recently as five years ago. The other thing that needs to be emphasized is that many reform proposals depend on labor/management negotiations. Some don't: the system will be able to develop and implement new certification standards and evaluation procedures without having to go through collective bargaining. Clearly, if you want to do anything that will involve changing the salary structure you're going to have to negotiate with teachers.

This relates a bit to the larger, more political issue of voucher systems and tuition tax credits. Three years ago, Washington had one of the most hard-fought campaigns in the United States over a tuition tax credit proposal. Nearly two hundred thousand dollars was expended by an out-of-state conservative organization trying to enact a very far-reaching tuition tax credit initiative that would have given a $1,200 credit to anyone spending at least that amount to send a D.C. child to a private school. It didn't even have to be for one's own child. It could be for a grandson or granddaughter; even a company could claim it, for that matter. When this proposal was finally voted on, it was defeated by a margin of eight or nine to one in an election that was held citywide. And I think one of the reasons that happened was because we had in place at that moment a school board with strong public acceptance. This example does suggest that it is possible to mobilize a community around the public schools to prevent that kind of a procedure from being adopted.

Kinlow: I think it's important, too, to keep in mind that current enrollment of students in public schools is 88,000, compared to fewer than 14,000 in non-public schools. The student population is well over 50 percent from poor and moderate-income families. Right now, I think we say that 60 percent of our students are eligible for free or reduced-cost lunches.

Boggs: A lot of people think the District of Columbia is a predominantly black school system that might be much different if white kids weren't going to private schools. Approximately 60 percent of the white children who live in the city are attending parochial or other private schools. If for some reason all of them suddenly elected to go to public schools you'd add only about five thousand white kids to the school system.

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Kinlow: Traditionally, though, families with a certain background or income or whatever didn't give serious consideration to public schools. Then you have another group that seriously considers it as an option, maybe puts the kids in public school for a while, then takes them out, whatever the circumstances seem to dictate. Actually, we have a slightly *diminishing* number of students in private situations which suggests that, whatever the pattern was in the past, it isn't being exacerbated and may even be changing a little bit. Some parents who have sent their kids to private school for a few years bring them back to the public school system at the high school level. This may be because of the recession we went through, and because parents start thinking, well, I know I'm going to put my kid in college two or three years from now and maybe I need to conserve money for a few years. Based on the phone calls I get from parents of the solidly middle and upper-middle class, I know that around the tenth grade, parents who took their kids out in seventh grade start putting them back in public schools for the last two or three years.

Boggs: I think the District of Columbia, given where it was, had to invest heavily—and it didn't have that much to invest—in those kids who weren't benefiting from the school system. I think it's fair to say that until you're dealing adequately with everyone, you can't really make increased spending for gifted and talented children the top priority. The District schools have had some difficulty in attracting middle-class students and kids who would be eligible for scholarships in private schools. A good number of black children are gaining scholarships to private schools; the Black Student Fund of the District of Columbia probably supports several hundred black children a year in those programs; you also have a higher achievement program that is sponsored by a parochial school that is encouraging several hundred black children who show skills to seek and obtain positions in the parochial schools. And you obviously have two-thirds of the white parents sending their kids to private schools. I think many of them are doing it simply because they want to be absolutely certain of providing the best possible education for their children. They may also want them to have some kind of cultural advantages that they believe are unavailable in the public-school system. The fact is, that if those black and white children were all in the public-school system, it would make the job of obtaining the necessary resources and enacting the other needed reforms much easier because you would have even more politically knowledgeable and astute people working on these problems; their presence would really make a difference.

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Kinlow: School systems succeed or don't succeed largely on the basis of the amount of clout that gets exercised on behalf of public education. This is why the dynamics of having a new kind of board of education and a progressive superintendent combined with an organization like Parents United really almost *has* to pay dividends. It isn't so much a function of the numbers, the physical bodies, as it is the access some parents have to policymakers, to the people on the city council. That contact will make a difference when election time comes. They are the givers of money; they give parties and teas and they raise money and they not only go to the polls, they man the polls, so to speak. When you have a group of people like *that* lobbying for change, then things start to happen.

Boggs: An example of something that may in the future draw people back to the public schools in the District is the new Academic High School that was established three years ago to provide very high-level academic training for kids. It's drawing children from schools all over the city by application and by passage of an exam.

Kinlow: In addition to so-called "magnet schools" we have a number of special programs *within* schools that are beginning to give certain schools a holding power they didn't have before. We have one school that features a humanities program, another that has a pre-engineering program. This is becoming the thing to do. You create a magnet within the school that's designed to enrich the whole atmosphere. Magnet schools can be overdone; they can cream away all of the energetic, brighter, more dedicated teachers and kids, and the ones left behind suffer that loss. So I've been in favor, generally, of creating magnet programs within schools rather than creating entirely new schools.

Boggs: We have a tremendous opportunity right now in the District of Columbia school system. Over the next five years there will be at least a 20 percent turnover of the teaching force. Over the next ten years there will be a 50 percent turnover. Parents have a great opportunity to urge our school system to develop new standards for hiring and for evaluation, and to accompany those changes with a major overhaul of the pay system. Clearly, to be market sensitive, to be really competitive, if you want to recruit quality students coming out of the colleges you're going to have to pay teachers a lot more money. If you want them to teach in a school system like the District of Columbia, which has all of the problems you'd associate with an

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urban school system, you've got to pay them even more. And we may soon be able to do that, because those teachers retiring from our school system are the most senior teachers, who are at the upper end of the salary scale. As these teachers leave, schools should be able to raise the entry-level salaries; this would both save the system money *and* bring in better teachers.

Kinlow: One of the things I'm almost certain that we will do, even though the plan is still in the formative stages, is not only introduce testing requirements for new teachers, but consider new teachers, in effect, as interns, keeping them under fairly close supervision during their first year or two. One of the things I've said ever since I got involved in this business is that teaching is the only profession I know in which a professional is a journeyman from day one. The minute new teachers step into the classroom, they are full-fledged journeymen-professionals. Everybody else goes through an internship, or a residency, or works under the tutelage and supervision of another professional—whether he's an architect, engineer, physician—with the possible exception of a lawyer who has to pass the bar. But almost everybody else has to go through this supervisory period, and we're going to institute an intern system along that line.

Another thing we're determined to do is to eliminate computer phobia in the communication and information society we're going to have. We don't want kids to be intimidated by computers. Our courses are designed to help students understand some of the logic of the computer, how it operates, and to be on friendly terms with it. It teaches them about the impact computers are going to have on their lives. And it teaches them how to use the computer in practical, everyday ways. Now, those are the primary objectives that will obtain for every school. We should have the program completely implemented by 1987; by that year every child completing the ninth grade will be computer literate.

Boggs: These reforms are all steps in the right direction, but I think there's a lot that still has to be done. In terms of money alone, we've concluded that our school system needs probably an additional $50 million a year to produce the kind of programs that are needed. Now that would involve significant increases for teachers, coupled with higher standards; significant reductions in class size for kids that are having problems; expansion of pre-kindergarten programs, and significant efforts to improve writing skills. Those are just a few things. Add them up, and that takes a lot of money.

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Kinlow: The way I look at it is: what do you want the graduating students to look like? What do you want your school administrators to look like? Before you can have an optimal system you have to ask, what is a public school system supposed to do in a contemporary setting?

We have to assume that for 10 percent of the kids in the District of Columbia, public school is not an option. We're only about five percentage points away from having what is probably close to an optimal percentage, that is, 90 percent of the available school age population; we've got maybe 85 percent. We expect at least half of our kids to go on to college when they finish. We expect the other half or thereabouts to be ready to do entry-level work in the work force. We also want those who decide to go on to college to be job worthy. So we need to know exactly what the demands of the job-market are. One of the encouraging things that's happening in Washington is that we have what is called a public/private partnership that has taken off by leaps and bounds with some of the major corporations in the country. Businesses are coming into the school system and asking, "What can we do to help you?" One will "adopt" a school and put in a program. IBM will come and put in computers and teach kids how to use computers in kindergarten. Another will contribute a program at the high-school level.

I think we have to intensify our recent emphasis on making the secondary program what it ought to be. We can't simply rely on the progress we've made in the elementary level. We've got to look at foreign-language skills. We've made foreign language a requirement for graduation, but I don't think that's nearly enough. We've got to strengthen the math and science program. And that's going to take a multi-faceted approach because, aside from the fact that we tend not to pay teachers enough in general, we certainly don't pay enough to retain teachers of math and science. So we have to make a special effort to attract and to retain teachers in those subjects. We've got to start teaching math and science at the elementary-school level to a larger extent than we currently do. We've got to make sure that students with special needs are placed in smaller classroom situations. Our in-school alternative programs have to be beefed up. I think that making the eleventh grade the assessment grade, the time at which one evaluates a student's deficiencies, is too late. You need to take a real serious look all the way through junior high school to make sure that there's no real slippage occurring from seventh to eighth to ninth grade.

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The major, major challenge, though, is how to get the most competent principals and teachers. We've got to build an evaluation system that allows at least three parties to be a part of the evaluation system. I think, for example, that a teacher and a school ought to be reviewed by the parents. I think teachers ought to be evaluated by their peers and by people who are professionals in their content area and by those who have some supervisory responsibility. I've never yet found a situation where if you asked a group of parents about their school you couldn't get a pretty fair evaluation of whether it is a good school or not. In fact, it's almost impossible to ask kids at the end of the year whether they have a good classroom teacher, and get the wrong answer, a divided answer; you'll basically get a consensus. So I still think that there are some very simple, logical kinds of things that can be done, and that we in Washington have the good sense to know how to do. If we can keep the money going I think we're going to have a system that comes close to being a model school system. I think that only somebody who has seen what the Washington system was like ten years ago, who has seen the dynamics, who has seen the pieces coming together, can appreciate the ideas that are now there; the consensus, the harmony, the will to push and not just say, "Okay, let's just lay back now and let the seeds we've planted grow . . ."

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Timothy S. Healy

Any analysis of where we stand on high schools at the moment—and I am more comfortable talking about high schools or colleges, since that is where my experience lies—ought to acknowledge that we are doing something that no nation on the face of the earth has ever tried to do. We are trying to educate almost everybody. At the turn of the century, 10 percent of the nation's students were in high

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school; eighty years later, we're statistically close to 100 percent, at least in the freshman and sophomore years. The dream of universal schooling is magnificent; it is time, however, for us to develop some new political canons on how to handle that dream. In a sense Ted Sizer has begun to do that. We need to go further; it seems to me that it is time somebody sat down and analyzed carefully what legitimate interest "the state"—let's use the French form, the State—has in secondary schooling; whether it ought to be the case that once a basic education is achieved, the young citizen, while given a guarantee that he or she may always return for further education, ought to be free to leave school. Sizer's suggestion is fairly radical, that once the three goals of effective literacy, effective numeracy, and sufficient civic knowledge to function as a voter and a citizen have been achieved, the state can have no other purpose. The parents may not have achieved their purpose; the student may not have achieved his purpose; but the state has achieved its purpose. At that point, at somewhere around age 15 or 16, mandatory schooling could become optional schooling because the state's function has been accomplished; babysitting isn't a part of its purpose.

Another political issue that needs to concern us, a point emphasized in an earlier *Daedalus* article by Jerry Grant on the high schools (Summer 1981), is the extent to which, in the schoolroom as in so many other American institutions today, we are beset by this mad compulsion to submit everything to the courts. Grant tells the story of a youngster who, on his first day at a good public school in a Chicago suburb, is given a printed document detailing his legal rights in respect to teachers, principals, and others. It would seem to me much more apposite for that boy to be given a booklet detailing his *obligations* as part of the school community.

Now, one of the sad things about schooling today is that schoolteaching is not a career that holds much appeal for the literate, mobile, and extremely bright youngster. University teaching still does, and this is curious because university teaching is, comparatively speaking, just as poorly paid; still, university teaching retains a certain social cachet: it's regarded as a good cause to give one's life to, whereas high-school teaching is not. In this, we appear to be very different from the English. My memory suggests—and I hope that I am not mistaken in this—that more bright students consider schoolmastering a serious career option in England than do young Americans in the same position. Very good students with excellent degrees—every now and then even someone with first-class honors from Oxford—will consider schoolteaching as a permanent or tem-

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porary career; in a comparable American university, at the same level of selectivity as Oxford, such an option will not even be thought of. We have very bright men and women at Georgetown who will consider teaching in Nicaragua or Peru for a year or two, will accept a Peace Corps obligation, but once that is finished they turn to the "serious" careers open to them. They will opt for careers in law or business, but their minds and imaginations never seem to pull them towards teaching. I don't know what the school systems can do about this, what the universities can do, but certainly within the average American university the faculty member is very unlikely to encourage a bright student to go into high-school teaching; the bright student is even less likely to raise this as a career possibility. I wish I had an easy answer for why this is so; I don't. I've worried over it because it seems to me that as long as graduates do not regard schoolteaching as a career possibility for themselves, they are not going to invest it with much importance.

In England, Manchester Grammar school was once able to draw the very best of a university class. It was an acceptable profession to students within the university. In the United States, a decision to accept a teaching post at an absolutely first-class school like St. Paul's, for example, would cause eyebrows to be raised. The young man or woman who chose to do this would be regarded as doing it either out of a deep sense of personal involvement or, perhaps, out of some sort of religious commitment. If it was the latter, the choice would be respected because the motive would be taken seriously; if it was the former, good friends might sit him or her down and say, "Hey, do you really mean this?" This, to me, is a massive problem; we have not succeeded in selling schoolteaching as a career to our young. And I don't think the problem has simply to do with salaries. I don't think money moves those in their early twenties quite that much. In discounting the possibility of a better teaching career, they are reflecting a national attitude.

I think that part of the reason really able students don't go into teaching has to do with our schools of education. Statistics suggest that nationally as well as locally—and certainly this was my experience at CUNY—schools of education attract student bodies with academic credentials substantially inferior to those admitted to the liberal arts, engineering, business, or other major undergraduate programs. In getting as deeply involved as they have in Education with a capital "E," the schools of education may have effectively done the enterprise real damage. There is in the average school of education a certain sense of unreality, particularly if the school had done

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what many have chosen to do, which is to draw within itself its own departments of mathematics, English, and so forth, so that there is English instruction for the liberal-arts college student and English instruction for teachers, math for the college or the school of engineering student and math courses for teachers. We have substituted another kind of degree for the classic undergraduate bachelor's degree; first-class colleges, however, have a way of insisting that a Bachelor of Arts degree is the first degree that all who claim to be educated need to have.

There are other problems as well. Most education techniques ought not to figure as university subjects; they lack substance; they rarely involve the great historic strengths of the university, including the capacity to philosophize; they don't put a premium on the imagination; they almost never deal in symbolic learning—all things that the undergraduate curriculum is supposed to demand of its students, and sometimes does. Education courses generally are much more trade-oriented; they are practical, and are perhaps best taught in schools by practicing teachers rather than by professors who are detached from the school experience. An odd symptom of this can be seen in a university administrative office. Three kinds of CVs pass a dean's desk. For philosophers and historians, and most of the faculty in the social sciences and the humanities, curricula vitae tend to be two or three pages. If the man or woman is a heavy publisher, it may be three pages, perhaps four. In the natural sciences, curricula vitae tend to be one page, together with a stapled wad of endless publications, five or six a year. It's a different kind of publishing rhythm and a very different kind of publication. Again, if you detach the list of authored and co-authored articles, you get a one- or two-page vita. In every school of education, however, for anyone in the senior ranks, the curriculum vitae is twenty pages or more. Every time you attend a conference or deliver a paper, mention is made of the fact, whether or not the paper was ever published. Every time a film strip is prepared, it is listed. Every time you sit as a consultant on a board, it's cited. What these vitae look like are pint-sized biographies, and that is not the purpose of a CV at all.

In other words, the whole record is filled with puffery, and it seems to me that the puffery reflects the intellectual softness of the enterprise. Why is it necessary for a forty- or fifty-year-old man or woman in a university to indulge in this sort of quite ridiculous exaggeration? A member of a philosophy department lists his or her book reviews under the one-line heading: "Reviews for the following magazines" and leaves it at that. In a school of education, if you write so much as

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an op-ed piece, it has to be noted and featured. In my seven years at CUNY, I dealt with this kind of *ersatz* activity. I considered these things totally unreal; a faculty desperate to valorize itself in the eyes of its colleagues was puffing everything it did beyond all acceptable proportions, saying, in effect, "Look at how much I have accomplished." Other disciplines didn't feel this same compulsion and were content to list things in a briefer, more austere form. It is a small point, perhaps, but it strikes me as reflecting the fact that a great deal of what went on in the classrooms of schools of education was in some analogous way unreal, below the level of what students need to experience in a university.

I remember a bright student at Queens College once saying that she was taking a course in the philosophy of education, and she remarked, rather sardonically, that this was the "gee whiz" approach to Hegel. A statement of no cosmic importance, but suggesting how instinctively such students are led to compare serious philosophy courses with others that are known to provide a distinctly soft option. It does schools of education no good to be thought of in those ways.

Let me shift back to the high schools for a moment. Diane Ravitch has observed that the creation of a faculty, in the university sense, involves the creation of a body of professional men and women sharing intellectual discourse—not just talking to each other about their work, but going beyond their individual daily pursuits to discuss larger matters. I think it is fair to say that if I enter a school, teach my five English classes a day, go home, and use the teacher's room mostly for correcting papers during the one class hour a day that I am free, and have no other meaningful contact with my colleagues, there is not much community there. If, in addition, I go home to do a second job because I need the income for my own kids, the idea of being a professional has very little meaning. Private schools don't seem to suffer as much from this because some of them—the best certainly—develop a sense of corporate identity, a kind of sharing that is fostered perhaps more by poverty than by anything else, but it is still there. The public schools are generally far more impersonal. Still, it is possible for a public school to shape its teachers into a "community," to look out for the professor in a local community or four-year college who might take them through the works of William Butler Yeats in a given year, or lead them through an area of speculative mathematics that even the non-mathematician would be able to follow; can the school's teachers not be led to discuss in serious intellectual terms the election of a president, the relations between Congress and foreign policy, United States military interests in the

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Middle East or Central America—topics that are daily grist for the mill at many excellent universities, but that are not necessarily intimately tied to teaching? You build community by sharing, and sharing more than work.

We have already made some modest efforts in Washington to see if this sort of thing can be done. We have been trying on an ad hoc basis with English teachers in the District of Columbia, but the program is still regarded by too many of them as just another professional "brownie point" that will help to get them promoted. Its real purpose—to draw faculty members and high-school teachers from ten or twelve schools together, to pull together the entire teaching body of one school into serious and substantive discussion—is still not recognized. Even though such a program cannot have a direct and immediate bearing on the work in the classroom, it can have a direct and important influence on the identity of the school.

When you turn to consider Catholic schools, it is easy to see how introducing a religious element into the motivation of schoolteachers lets loose very powerful and productive energies. You've let loose something that touches every aspect of living, not only what goes on in the classroom but also what goes on in the corridors; it touches discipline, curriculum, athletics. You have a kind of a given understanding and purpose in such places that galvanizes the whole activity of the school around it. In both Christian and Jewish schools you have a yearning for symbolic learning, for dealing with what Roman Catholics generally call the sacramental aspects of living. This is an internal galvanizer for both students and faculty. In dealing with these great symbolic nodes that are the content of both major American religious traditions, you are involving practical reality, exploring intellectual areas, that are complex. But this is something that you cannot ask the public schools to do. John Courtney Murray's notion of public religion or secular religion—the sense of our having a mission as a republic—is largely gone, or at least seriously weakened; in any case, it isn't as powerful a motivating force as the religious instinct.

Now, how you interpret the phenomenon of fundamentalism and evangelism in this context, I honestly don't know. Let us acknowledge that the motive behind some of the fundamentalist schools is honest, in consonance with the law. Once you let the religious spirit loose, you achieve an identity; I wonder if that identity is anywhere as destructive as many public-school propagandists make it out to be. In other words, I have no fundamentalist leanings whatsoever—most Jesuits are brought up in a different kind of intellectual tradition—but

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I wonder if there isn't something very serious in the instinct that leads parents to choose these schools for their children, who see in them a kind of grouping around a powerful integrator. I wonder if certain of those schools, precisely because of the power of that integrative force, are not doing a far better job than schools with more highly trained teachers and a more diverse student body.

I recently saw a report on TV about a county near Washington that had four high schools and was seriously considering closing one of them. It really does rock your mind to realize that when a school gets down to twelve hundred students it is no longer regarded as a viable entity! I went to a good high school that had five hundred kids in it, and we thought it was very big. Ted Sizer took Andover, after its merger with a local private girls' school, from eleven hundred students down to nine hundred students, and he said that nine hundred was enormous; it was all that he and his faculty could handle. When you get into a high-school situation where the principal doesn't know the names of his seniors, it seems to me that the school is in trouble. Our whole concept of size has led us badly astray. I define the ideal situation as one in which the principal knows the names of most seniors. If the principal is the leader of the school, some live contact with many students is called for; that contact ought not to be limited to those who are members of student government or serve on the school newspaper. He or she ought to know the seniors, many of the juniors, and all the troublesome sophomores.

You've asked me to conclude by selecting any two issues that I think have received insufficient attention. First, we've got to get together and hack out a body of law that allows schools a certain real autonomy. We've done it fairly well for the universities; I don't see any reason why it cannot be done for the high schools. I'm not talking about condoning real injustice, but I am talking about keeping things like disciplinary actions within the hands of people who intend to use them for the growth of students, and that excludes every lawyer I have met, including those who are my close friends. This is not their bag; this is not what the law is intended to do and it doesn't do it well. As soon as you get a school case trammelled in the law, all sorts of extraneous societal influences come in. The student is pushed into the background; the school is rendered powerless, you have a lot of discourse similar to what goes on in the presidential debates, which seem to me a piece of puffery for media pooh-bahs who do everything they can to push themselves to the fore and the debate into the background.

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Second, is it not time for us, now that we have achieved nearly universal access, to redefine the reasonable state interest, the reasonable political interest in schooling, to ask whether we do not need to restructure the way in which we deliver schooling to the young, and also the not-so-young? I do not favor the idea of turning away from the notion that this republic wishes for all of its citizens to have the equivalent of a high-school diploma; I do question whether that objective has to be achieved before the age of eighteen. Society is now saying that the option is between school and jail; that seems to me to be both undemocratic and unrealistic. I am not saying, if students are disruptive let's simply wash them out. I don't think a youngster who gets angry at the algebra teacher on Tuesday ought to be allowed to quit school on Wednesday. I think the issues call for careful thought, research, experimentation. We need to rethink certain elements of compulsory schooling, one of those things now so taken for granted that we never even question it.

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James F. Hawker

My response to the question of what changes have occurred in Catholic schools over the past ten years, particularly in this diocese, must begin with an observation that explains my own perspective. I served from 1973 to 1983 in the Catholic school department here, and my responsibility was exclusively in the area of religious education in the Catholic schools, including the formation and development of faculty. I am no longer in the Catholic schools department; I now direct the archdiocesan office of religious education, which conducts programs in the parish for children who attend public schools.

As you know, during the 1950s and 1960s a significant number of Catholic schools closed. They closed for many reasons. The principal reason, supposedly, was money, the sacrifice involved in trying to

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keep them open. But you also, at the time, had to ask whether the motivation existed, on the part of the Church leadership, to make the sacrifices necessary to keep the schools open. While money was, of course, a problem, it was also beginning to be obvious that more and more religious were leaving their communities, or thinking in terms of some other kind of apostolate rather than education. Perhaps this was a reflection of the culture: people were looking for quick results, and if they didn't see quick answers, didn't find verifiable, objective, measurable results quickly, they tended to look in other directions. In my own mind, the Church and the religious communities were to some extent affected by that mentality as well. In some quarters, the value of the whole Catholic educational enterprise was questioned. Education is slow; many Catholics tended to prefer certain areas of social justice where one can see tangible results more quickly. That was certainly a factor.

Money was also a factor, because when the religious began to pull out of schools, more lay people had to be brought in. That required an adjustment in salary, although I think it's fair to say that traditionally, across the board, the salary scale for lay people, whether in teaching or administration in Catholic schools, has been far from what it should be. This is one of the most difficult and painful experiences we have had; we have not been able to offer salaries appropriate to professional men and women within the ministry of Catholic schooling. That has been of great concern to us. There has been another notable development, which is a significant increase, at least in some Catholic schools, of non-Catholics, both as members of the teaching force and as students. This is particularly true in the archdiocese of Boston, especially in the inner-city schools, where you have many black students who are not Catholic. Cathedral High School in Boston, for example, is, I think, somewhere around 50-55 percent non-Catholic in its student body. It was for this reason that I wrote a paper published by the National Catholic Educational Association entitled "The Non-Catholic and the Catholic School." The phenomenon calls for investigation and conversation. What ought the expectations of these young people be? What do their parents look for in the Catholic school? How are these developments seen from the school's perspective? Also, how do the non-Catholic teachers in the Catholic schools perceive themselves?

In the archdiocese of Boston over the past ten to fifteen years, there has been a whole new and exciting investigation of the nature, purpose, and mission of the Catholic school. It was stimulated by the bishops' pastoral letter that came out early in the 1970s called "To

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Teach as Jesus Did," which took a good, hard look at just what the Catholic school should be. What is there, the bishops asked, about the Catholic school that makes it distinctive and unique, not only in theory, but also, hopefully, in reality? You look first at the ideal; the task of the schoolperson is to compare the local reality to that ideal and strive to match it. After the pastoral, we had a number of documents coming out of Rome that were very helpful to us. They were very supportive of Catholic schools, and have since been influential in stimulating people in the schools to examine whether or not they are fulfilling their responsibility as educational agents of the Church. There has been a resurgence of investigation into what we are about, and how we can better fulfill our mission. As we all know, the best way to improve what you are doing is to know where you are headed.

It is important to note that *within* the past ten years, we have closed an insignificant number of schools. There has been a real turnabout in these years. Let me clarify one other thing. The vast majority of closings even in the 1960s and early 1970s did not affect high schools, but elementary schools: for some reason, parents seem much more eager to have their children attend Catholic high schools than they are to have them go to Catholic elementary schools. The Boston archdiocese at this time, concerned about the number of schools closing, and the Cardinal, through the board of education, set up a process whereby no school could be closed unless the parish went through certain formal procedures. Traditionally, the parish priest was the sole authority figure in the parish and had the power to decide whether or not to close a school. This change was very beneficial—people from the parish were now involved. Another improvement in the system was the establishment of school boards within the parishes which had the responsibility for running the school, for hiring teachers, and for administration. The school was no longer simply and solely to be in the lap of the pastor. When the pastor had the whole responsibility, parishioners could be overly critical, claiming that he acted too quickly in closing a school. In fact, he was alone in the decision. Now, in those parish settings where there is a school board the pastor has a great deal of help, and there is a new sense of mission.

These changes do not assure that all Catholics choose Catholic schools for their children. Some prefer to have them go to the local public school. When they make that judgment, there are two or three factors that are important parts of the decision. First, they may legitimately feel that the public-school system in their community,

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whatever it may be, offers a better education than is available at the Catholic school. Second, there may be some concern that they will have to pay a great deal for college, and even for high school, and they would prefer not to pay tuition for Catholic elementary school also. Third, and this is a very important point, there may be some parents who would have sent their children to Catholic schools before, when they were largely staffed by religious, but now don't wish to send them when well over 60 percent of the faculty is lay; when, in some instances the administration is lay; and when, in their view, the school has lost much of its distinctively Catholic flavor.

The Catholic schools in this archdiocese are, generally speaking, neighborhood schools—at least the elementary schools are (once again, high schools are a separate category). If you look at, for example, a school in Needham such as St. Joseph's, you are going to find that most of the students come from the three, four, or five surrounding parishes. This was a problem that the Cardinal tackled directly at the time of the busing controversy. He set down very clear guidelines, guaranteeing that people from Boston would not be sending their children to schools in Quincy, Newton, Cambridge, or wherever. The whole busing controversy had stimulated some public-school parents to send their kids wherever they could so as to get them away from what was happening in Boston. It is important to recognize, however, where the Catholic elementary schools are located. For the most part, as I reflect on it, Catholic elementary schools are located in areas where you have low- or middle-income families. We exist to serve those families.

The high schools, on the other hand, are much more regional. In this archdiocese there are fifty of them, of three types. Of the first, diocesan or regional—central is a better term—there are eleven in number; they are operated by the archdiocese of Boston through a corporation. Then, there are roughly twenty-five private Catholic high schools, owned and operated by religious orders of men or women. Finally, there are the so-called parish high schools, of which there are ten or twelve. The parish schools are in many instances struggling to keep alive. Because parishes have to handle the operating costs of their elementary schools, if, in addition, they have a parish high school to support, the burden is heavy.

The diocesan high schools generally have done very well. Of the eleven, only two have needed diocesan support, and that was largely because of their concern to serve the poor. Cathedral High School in the South End and Mission High School in Roxbury both have a varied student body. Cardinal Cushing High School in South Boston,

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used to, but during a certain period the black population in the area became hesitant and moved out; they are now returning to the school. These three would certainly stand out as schools serving very diverse populations. Mission has performed an especially valuable service to the minority community. When these schools decided that they were going to serve minorities—serve particularly those minorities who had been educationally deprived—they needed to shift their educational perspectives to reflect the abilities of the young who were now attending their schools. Most of us feel that schools exist to serve those who attend them, to assist students in their growth and development, intellectually, and also spiritually. The school leadership, then, has to look realistically at its students, to make a prudential judgment of what is best for them. In a situation like that of Cathedral High School, it seemed important to keep the class size small and in that way help students to learn and grow. One simply cannot conduct business today as one did in 1955, when I graduated from Cathedral High.

I would say that in the late 1960s and early 1970s, Catholic education was in a period of adolescence moving into adulthood; today, those who hold responsible positions in the schools are recognized by the Church as exercising a very important public ministry within the Church, whether they are teaching history, French, math, or geometry. The Catholic school's rationale—its aim and purpose—is clearly defined as assisting people to come to a clearer recognition of their own identity, which is a very important question today from the perspective of the Gospel. We seek to give people a new insight, a particular insight, regarding the nature of their mission, whether they be teacher or student. There has been a great emphasis in the last few years on the Catholic school's responsibility to assist young people to recognize the relationship between their faith and the culture in which they live. Students ought to be developing their talents, skills, and abilities to understand this relationship as well as the relationship between their faith and life. So, when we reflect on the objectives of the Catholic school, we conclude that it is to assist young people to grasp the significance of faith and culture, faith and life, to develop their intellectual skills from various perspectives, and to come to know and understand the heritage that has brought them forth.

From the point of view of religious education, the Catholic school has a three-fold responsibility. First, it should be involved in the whole process of transmitting information regarding the teachings of the Church. That would include—and this is something that has been

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very much expanded over the past fifteen years—the social doctrine of the Church. Second, there should be a community dimension, where, from a religious point of view, we recognize the necessity of helping young people to grow not only intellectually but also affectively. Hence, the great emphasis in Catholic schools on retreats and formation programs; this is not seen as separate from the educational apostolate, but integral to it. Finally, there is the area of service. We see the necessity of having young people of high-school age involved in different sorts of service opportunities. There is a very interesting program going on in the schools of this archdiocese called *hesed*—that's Hebrew for service. Young people from Cathedral, which is an inner-city high school, and from Mission High School in Roxbury, come together with young people from Newton Country Day in suburban Newton on a fairly regular basis to perform service within the community, and then to reflect together on that service. Catholic education assumes the responsibility of educating the whole person, of assisting the whole person to grow.

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John R. Silber

I'd like to begin by talking about that very useful report, *A Nation at Risk*. It referred to a "rising tide of mediocrity," a phrase a *New York Times* writer called a curious misuse of language since, after all, mediocre is mediocre. How can it be a rising tide? That was, of course, to misunderstand totally. The rising tide of mediocrity was the rising tide of people who scored in the mediocre range even though their talent was obviously substantially above average. It was a rising tide of underachievers, and so the phrase was in no way paradoxical.

From the statistics I have gathered, it's a rising tide of disaster, of ineducability, of sheer incompetence. This is obviously not related to the genetic ability or talent of the American people, which has not

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had any reason to decline over the last forty years. What the decline in educational quality reflects is the thousands of variables that are associated with the culture of the United States as expressed from, let's say, 1960 to 1984. In the last two decades, television has occupied an immense amount of time in children's lives. In 1983, the Nielsen organization estimated that the average child between the ages of two and eleven watched approximately twenty-four hours of television each week—that's 20 percent of the child's waking hours.

This effectively explodes the notion that somehow television is naturally educative, and that children who watch a lot of television are learning more and have many more experiences than those whose families don't watch TV. It is much more likely that young Americans are seeing things and hearing things that no child should see or hear. Only if he is extremely unfortunate would a person have experiences of the sort ten-year-old or twelve-year-old children regularly see on television; but if he were at all fortunate, he might arrive at a ripe old age and never have heard people talk to one another or treat one another in the ways that a child has heard and seen on television, might never have seen the contempt heaped on police officers and other people without any social justification.

The notion that such things also occur in opera and in theater is a bogus argument: those dramas don't intrude into the home. Moreover, people are prepared to go to the theater by education and by taste. They prepare to go to the opera by gaining the background necessary to enjoy it. They dress up in their best clothes and buy a ticket and go into a theater and sit down and the curtains open—and all of this says, in effect, "once upon a time . . ."

The same kind of bogus argument is sometimes applied to Grimms' fairy tales: they are full of violence—how terrible it must be for children to listen to them. Again this overlooks the great power that is contained in that phrase, "once upon a time . . .," which establishes an unreal perspective.

I shall never get over having attended a World Series game here in Boston a few years ago, and at the end of the game I saw a youngster who was obviously in a great hurry to leave look down, then jump over the edge of the grandstand and break his legs as he struck the pavement thirty-five feet below. I am sure that boy had seen people do stunts so many times on television it never crossed his silly mind that he could not do the same thing.

This is the home situation that schools have to contend with; this is the culture within which our schools have to function. And the main way we can cope with it is by trying to change the curriculum

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within the schools, and by trying to change who teaches. That's obviously the way that we can make the greatest impact. This means that people have got to become realistically aware of the extent to which the women's movement, which quite properly opened up all kinds of vocational opportunities for women, has made the teaching profession far less competitive for extremely intelligent, highly dedicated, and highly responsible women. As a consequence, many of those who now elect to go into teaching are among the least talented students we have.

In terms of national statistics, those who express an interest in going into education score about eighty points below average on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). At Boston University's School of Education we reduced the number of students in our freshman class from six hundred students in 1971 to fifty students last year. We have foregone tens of millions of dollars in potential tuition income because we were determined to hold up those standards. We have an average SAT score at our School of Education of 1,058, more than two hundred points higher than the average for schools of education in this country. It is scandalous that any school of education should operate on an average of less than 1,000.

You may say, "But everyone can't make that score. . . ." Then I say that the university should not certify them as teachers. It seems to me that the Department of Education should try to accelerate the *availability* of standardized tests for the evaluation of both students and teachers, so that school boards and citizens throughout the country could have a more objective basis for assessing what their needs are. . . .

You can also measure the decline of quality in primary and secondary education by considering the case of New York's City College, which was once perhaps the greatest public institution in the United States. It was great before Berkeley and Michigan achieved their international standing; it was great when the University of Texas at Austin was struggling to attain regional eminence. City College was a great institution with superb faculty and a superb student body. Look at it today. From a qualitative standpoint it could not interest anybody except as an example of how not to operate a university. It is unworthy of its great tradition. It now deals with the graduates of the New York high schools by accepting an eighth-grade level of proficiency for admission. If it took seriously what it means to graduate from high school, a twelfth-grade level of proficiency would be required. They have felt it necessary to accept an eight-year

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proficiency instead of a twelve-year proficiency as the standard for high-school graduation. . . .

It is quite true that tenure poses an obstacle to the intelligent management of a school. But there is nothing in the tenure contract that protects a teacher from his own incompetence. If a school board is prepared to insist that teachers must take tests and must demonstrate their competence—at least minimal standards of competence—there is no way credibly to oppose that. Can you prove that a person is qualified to teach? *That* is difficult. But it is easy to prove that a person is incompetent. And you could place that burden on the school administrator.

It's very simple. If the teacher does not know the subject that he or she is supposed to teach, it is clear that that teacher is incompetent. A person might be an expert physicist and not be able to teach the subject. But a person who knows nothing about physics cannot possibly teach it. . . .

If we are to make real progress, we must destroy the guild monopoly on teacher certification now enjoyed by the schools of education. We should also get rid of state certification requirements, because they are designed primarily to protect incompetent teaching. I would like to see governors carry further the initiatives already undertaken by Governor Clinton of Arkansas, who has proposed an increase in teachers' salaries on the condition that teachers are prepared to demonstrate their competency. I would like to see a governor make a national reputation for himself by saying, "I am perfectly prepared to increase the teaching budget. I will raise the salaries of qualified teachers by 20 percent *on the condition* that teachers take a test to demonstrate their competence. At the same time, we are going to meet the teacher shortage, especially in science and mathematics, by recruiting persons who have never taken a course in education—we will admit all the highly competent housewives whose children have now reached six years of age, who are ready to go to work while maintaining a career as a homemaker. We can provide a wonderful career opportunity for those women."

They would come to work from 8:00 in the morning to about 3:00 in the afternoon, five days a week, nine months out of the year. They would still have a far fuller life with their own children than they could have if they had a year-round job. At the same time, we would be gaining these enormously talented graduates of some of our best schools—of Smith, of Bryn Mawr, of Scripps—superbly qualified women who have been denied a career opportunity because they will not attempt to pass the negative intelligence test that is represented by

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the typical curriculum of a school of education. Persons with any intellectual sensibility will simply say, "We won't put up with those mindless courses." Consequently, they never get certified to teach.

It may be that a few of those housewives who did brilliantly as undergraduates at some of our finest colleges and universities will come into the classroom and won't be able to make the adjustment. Even if three out of ten fail, we will add seven out of that ten to the roster of new and highly competent teachers.

We should also avail ourselves of retired persons—retired engineers, retired mathematicians. Retired professionals could contribute 200,000 to 300,000 well-qualified teachers, perhaps 100,000 in the areas of science and mathematics. Few will have teaching certificates, but we could easily give them courses in practice-teaching at special summer institutes and put them to work. . . .

One proposal that would make sense, particularly around Boston where there is such a concentration of high-technology industries, is for corporations to contribute manpower to the schools. They could allow released time, perhaps an hour a day in the morning or in the late afternoon, for employees who are interested in teaching science or mathematics in the high schools. They could perform a valuable service there, and I would certainly favor legislation that would give corporations a special tax deduction for providing this released time. I would also suggest that those, including college professors, who are willing to do this receive a tax exemption up to a certain maximum for teaching such courses. This would put fresh blood and very high talent into our public schools.

Some may call this elitist, because some professors and scientists might only be willing to teach the best of the high-school students, when there are so many other, needier ones. But I think it is important that the better students be encouraged. They, too, need special attention if they are to reach their full potential. When you see the serious decline in the number of students scoring between 700 and 800 and between 600 and 700 and between 500 and 600 on the SATs, you realize that many of our very best students are not being educated. We cannot ignore the most talented one-third of the student body. If professors and scientists from industry want to teach only the top third, let them teach the top third. At least that will be done well. Our nation's survival is dependent on it.

If businesses are willing to lend the time and knowledge of valued employees to teach the best students, but the schools demand that they teach only students that are assigned without reference to scholastic abilities, the schools are saying: "We are going to refuse to

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be helped unless we are helped on exactly our own terms." We can't afford to say that given the state of our schools today.

It is true that some other teachers may lose the chance to teach the brightest kids. But only the very best teachers have the right to that opportunity. We spend too much time talking about what helps the teacher. We need to talk about what helps the student.

If a teacher is competent to teach mathematics and to teach it at an effective level up through the first year of algebra, let that teacher teach at the junior-high-school level. But if a teacher wants to teach chemistry in a high school and cannot take a college level course in chemistry and make an A+ in it, then let that teacher teach a general science course at the elementary or junior-high-school level. No teacher has the right to impose his incompetence on students. . . .

Many people think that the problem with education today is money. But New Hampshire has the highest average combined SAT scores in the country—925, and it ranks, in terms of per capita spending, twenty-eighth in the country. So you see there's no positive correlation between the amount states spend and what they get. Look at Massachusetts. Massachusetts ranks ninth in the nation in terms of total spending but has a combined average SAT score of only 888. And Boston is a hundred points lower than that. Boston spends, on the average, $5,400 each year on each pupil in its public schools, which is enough to provide the best possible private-school education. Boston spends enough money per student to have an absolutely superb school system with music, with special programs for the dyslexic student, with special programs for the handicapped. Nothing stands in the way of Boston having a great school system except the teachers' union and the political network that have debauched and disfigured Boston's school system for at least the last twenty-five years.

If the school committee had agreed, the city could have contracted with Boston University to run the Boston school system for exactly the same amount of money that the mayor had already put in his budget. We would have done this for a reasonable management fee, and the Boston school system would have become a great school system.

I put that proposal forward in 1981, and people only stopped laughing when I sent a dozen people from the staff of Boston University down to the school department for about two months to work through the budget. I could then show where the waste was. We were able to show a major decline in enrollments, and an

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unwarranted ratio of teachers to students. We also showed a huge surplus in the number of administrators.

If we could have removed, say, 50 percent of the administrators, and if we could have reduced the teaching staff by, say, 25 percent, there would have been huge savings. With these savings, we could then have transferred the least qualified teachers—who were, nevertheless, fine human beings—into a preschool program which could have become a model for the country. Children could have started at age three and had three years of kindergarten. (Incredibly, the school committee in Boston cancelled one year of kindergarten while they were trying to figure out their budget problems. They already had a surplus of teachers and a declining number of students, but instead of increasing educational opportunity they cut it back; that was how short-sighted they were.)

We could have created a marvelous, year-round preschool program that, in effect, would have provided daycare for very young children, and perhaps even a summer daycare program for children aged six to twelve. All those teachers who, after taking a competency test, were judged to be inadequate for junior or senior high schools, could have been put into these special programs. They would have become useful to the school system without increasing the budget. They would still have been on the payroll so it would have been reasonable to anticipate union support. The mayor and the city council and the school committee would have had extraordinary support from the women's movement and from all working women. This program would have enabled mothers on welfare to attend community colleges to advance their own education, because their children—who otherwise would keep them at home—would be cared for in those daycare centers.

When I suggested this idea quite seriously to the school committee, it only resulted in the school committee revising their demand for twenty million additional dollars down to a request for about five million additional dollars. The mayor was able to say, "At least some of the people who have studied this think the budget is adequate." But it never went beyond that. The last thing in the world that people who have made a political machine out of the school system would want to do is to put an end to that political gravy train. If they were to give that up, they would be giving up two hundred million dollars worth of patronage. No politician is likely to do that voluntarily. The parents in the city of Boston would have to be sufficiently outraged by the scandal of the Boston schools to say, "We're going to throw the

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rascals out of office and we are going to come in with some dedicated people who are prepared to save our schools."

Some parents have in recent years begun to say just that, and they are beginning to make real progress. I think the present school committee is far better than its predecessor, and the present superintendent is a great improvement over his predecessors. He is trying much harder and he has succeeded in raising standards. But he has not had sufficient backing to face down the union in the way that it has to be faced down.

If he had to deal with Al Shanker of the American Federation of Teachers I think he could succeed, because Al Shanker, like Superintendent Spillane, believes in competence. Al Shanker has not lost his idealism with regard to the teaching profession. He still believes that teaching is one of the highest activities to which a person may turn, and he is open to working with a school superintendent who wants to raise the standards of the teaching profession. He wants to see that it is done humanely and intelligently and considerately—and so does everybody else. But he is not willing to fudge on quality. The National Education Association, by contrast, has been willing, for the sake of very short-sighted unionist objectives, to compromise the quality of the American schools.

Al Shanker could make good use of all the teachers that industry can supply and he would still have important tasks and challenges for his most dedicated teachers. His dedicated teachers could be used as master teachers to supervise the teaching and serve as mentors to those housewives and other well-qualified recruits who lack conventional teacher certification. He would be giving his finest veterans the opportunity of teaching very bright people: they would be teaching those talented novices who would need to prepare for a semester before joining the ranks of full-time teachers.

Shanker's point about good and dedicated teachers needing to be honored is absolutely right. *Of course,* we need to honor superior teachers. But they are, unfortunately, a minority. We need to transfer or reeducate about one-third of our teachers; the other two-thirds are feasible, and one-third is remarkably able and dedicated. If we accept all the volunteers we can get from industry, all the housewives that are willing to teach, and all the retirees, we will have substantially reduced the shortage of excellent teachers.

The idea that society owes a living to teachers, people who have been sufficiently cared for by society to get a professional degree and a certification in a profession, is nonsense. That is to support without justification those to whom much has already been given and to

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waste the children that are now being deprived. That is not the way to organize a society that wants to have a future. . . .

Nothing that I have said should be interpreted as an attack on the trade union movement. It's been enormously successful. It has served mankind so well that I think we can say that the labor movement was the key to the refutation of Karl Marx's predictions. The reason why the United States has not developed a rigid class society is that the labor movement has put so much purchasing power and so much economic and social opportunity into the hands of the working class that they can become middle-class and, quite frequently, rich. Social and economic mobility have been characteristic of America: that has been a contribution of the labor movement for which I think every American should be profoundly grateful.

But the principles of trade unionism have been misused by the American Association of University Professors. The AAUP has in the past done a very good job as the ombudsman of the teaching profession at the college and university levels. But for the past decade, it has tried to hunt with hounds and run with the hare—to be both bargaining agent and ombudsman. Now, for example, it's trying to censure Temple University in the guise of an independent professional organization at the same time that it's trying to represent the Temple faculty as a trade union. The AAUP cannot have it both ways. It's time for them to rethink their purpose, and to choose one road or the other. . . .

It concerns me that I am sometimes told I lack compassion when I deny a professor tenure. But I am compassionately concerned for the *students* who would have been miseducated had tenure been granted. When I can remove a professor who would kill Shakespeare for a generation of students, I have done mankind a favor. As a matter of fact, I have also done a favor to the teacher, because I have relieved him of the guilt of having destroyed Shakespeare for a generation of students. Better that a millstone had been hung about his neck and he had been cast into the sea than that he should destroy Shakespeare for a generation of students. Some attention must be paid to the proper function of teaching. It is not to help the teacher; it is to help the student.

Back in the mid-1960s when I was working on a small committee on the organization of Operation Head Start, I sketched out a program called "Breaking the Cycle of Poverty." It focused on single-parent families and the breakup of families that resulted in the mother being the only parent in the home.

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I proposed to select ten male teachers and make them surrogate fathers for one hundred children who came from one-parent families. If they were paid a special salary for the three months of the summer—which would give them a substantial increase in their income, enabling their wives to stay home for the first six years of their children's lives—that extra income would allow them to remain in a teaching career. The surrogate father would be appointed when the child was six and would maintain that relationship with the child for the next twelve years of school. When the child is eighteen and graduates from high school, that would end that teacher's formal relationship as a surrogate father. Such a program would provide a male continuity that is badly needed in the lives of many young people.

That was one of those ideas that didn't go anywhere, but not because it shouldn't. If we wanted to increase male involvement in the schools—and I think it would be highly desirable—we have to increase their income. If men are to pursue teaching careers and provide not only for themselves but for a wife and children, they're going to have to have extra money. You could reverse the roles: if the man is going to stay home and take care of the kids, then the mother who provides for that family must be paid more than someone who does not have that responsibility. Such intelligent adjustments have to be made. Some common sense has to be brought into it. . . .

There are so many people who would like to be teachers. It provides the best working schedule of any of the professions. It is the only one that is compatible—fully compatible—with a really rich family life. That means it's ideal for women who would like to be both mothers and career people. (By the way, it should be pointed out that the role could be reversed: you could have fathers becoming schoolteachers and homemakers.) With this advantage to offer, we can attract talented people to teaching. Our failure to do so is the consequence of the obstacles that are thrown in the way, and we've got to remove those obstacles. . . .

I am not discouraged. I think the times are changing, and they are changing in the right direction. There is, I think, a new realism sweeping the country—I gave a talk on this subject about seven years ago and used that title. I noted that Mondale used that title for a while and then didn't do anything with it. But, it *is* time for new realism, a regaining of common sense that must cut through a lot of the bureaucratic regulations that have been imposed by government, that have been imposed by educational institutions, that have been

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imposed by trade unions. I think a great deal of idealism has to be recovered, but much is still there.

John R. Silber is president of Boston University in Boston, Massachusetts.

* * *

Charles Chatfield

If we agree that what happens in the classroom is crucial, then we can ask what makes for a successful class hour—the kind of class that is taken up not with verb drills, but with conversation. It begins with the teacher and the teacher's thorough command of the subject. The opportunity, then, is for the teacher to be a master of ceremonies, a director of impromptu speeches going on in the classroom. This is an ideal, of course, but it is realized a lot more often than one would think. Our best teachers take immediate pleasure—they get deep satisfaction—from the *theatrical* possibilities of the classroom. And they don't see in what other line of work they could find it. Kids like it too, once they catch on.

The theater metaphor is useful because it suggests a class hour in which all the young actors—students, I mean—are not held accountable for the final truth of what they say. Of course, it's up to the teacher to convince them of that. The theatrical class will be a bit like *Hamlet* without the last act: characters are free to try out ways of saying what's on their minds, realizing that their remarks are strictly for the occasion, *pro tem.* Often they will bring into their discussions vestiges of the world conceived in the language of right-or-wrong answers, a world that is in some sense a spurious fiction, and they'll preface what they say with something like: "I am probably all wet, but . . .," or "This is probably wrong, but . . .". That crucial "but" is the sign that for the nonce they are freeing themselves of the assumption that truth is fixed. They are free to discover, or just to make a stab at a new truth, even if what they say sounds at first a lot like a "mistake." Fresh truth from any quarter often has that aroma of mistakenness about it, doesn't it? I tell the whole school at the

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beginning of the year that we cultivate the art of making creative mistakes—not true blunders but partial truths that lead to fuller ones, like Newton and gravity.

At the risk of sounding highfalutin, I would say the notion of class-as-theater reflects the way the mind sometimes works when struggling towards fresh expression. It seems to me there are times when you divide your mind into different voices and listen to how they talk to each other. Then at a certain point, with the logic in place, the voices seem to blend—or maybe harmonize—and up pops a metaphor that becomes the right vehicle for that particular thought. (If I got all that from Frost or Virginia Woolf would it have any more authority? I sense I am in dangerous waters.)

Here is something of a contradiction. Fairly bright kids, like ours, who are lucky to be burdened with great expectations—expectations on the whole furnished by their parents—these students may be quite prepared, if encouraged, to turn aside from or to ignore easy success in the world of right-or-wrong answers. That's the world defined for them by the powerful SATs and enforced by the specter of acceptance or rejection at Yale. Perhaps they are confident that in the end they're sure to make out, yet even especially bright ones can easily feel great expectations to be those of the right-or-wrong world. But boys and girls struggling up the success ladder from the bottom—say, the children of immigrants, or maybe also children whose parents don't have much time for them—those kids may be barely hanging on. Just to learn the ways of the world—to avoid double negatives or the "impropriety" of "ain't," or perhaps how to manage their feelings when no one seems to care—those lessons may be a full enough challenge. After all, it turns out that the world I have called fictional in a somewhat snotty way finally pays the grocery bills and the surgeon's fees. It's the coin of Caesar that must be paid. Still, our job should be to open the beautiful gates of enjoyment to everyone.

Students who feel a harsh reality at their back, in spite of what I just said, may perform better and more continuously if they sense that a class is heading toward a denouement that they are contributing to. It may well be more difficult with these people, taken singly or in a group, to establish the working spirit of such a class, to get them to overcome their fears and their self-consciousness without implying that the class is an oversized playpen, or an encounter group, or a rap session. The teacher's task, which can never really be rehearsed, must be to show with real emphasis the value and the connectedness of class utterances, to place value on them by showing how they have combined. Where does the connectedness come from? If it seems to

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come from the instructor, he's not just pulling a rabbit out of a hat. One of our teachers, Eric Davis, wrote about it this way:

> Once on stage—to continue the metaphor—how does the actor know how to act? In all these things we do there seems to be a salutary collision between some given conditions, something analogous to a script or text, and the nature of the actor. The actor responds, out of his nature, to the text, to the clay or poem or problem, producing the performance. The wonderful thing about this is the danger of it, the sheer sense of adventure—for until he is on the stage, in the part, the actor really does not know what will be in that nature of his and how it will respond. . . .
>
> This impulse of which I'm speaking also drives toward some fineness of form. Any old articulation won't do. Students sometimes think of art as Freedom, whereas Academics means You Do What They Say. No! There's no freedom (in the sense of "anything goes") in either realm. The point is that the rules come, rightly, not from some panel of oppressor-elders but from the nature of the thing you're creating as you "act." *It* has to be right; *it* has to be beautiful; *it* has to be finely made or said.

One difficulty is the ball-and-chain mentality of the lesson plan. Charles Merrill, the founder of Commonwealth School, used to talk about the French minister of education who on any given day of the year could tell you what was being learned in a geography class in Strasbourg or Marseilles. Obviously, we're not there, and the recent demonstrations all over France suggest they're not there either. But the ambitious teacher can so easily trap himself into supposing that his prime task is "coverage": be sure you've come to Joe McCarthy or Watergate before the June 1 achievement tests. What teacher who is overly conscious of the principal who is in turn overly conscious of members of the school board who in turn measure their success (and get their votes) by pointing to the Dow-Jones indicator of this year's SAT scores—what teacher in that situation can afford to turn his class into a theater? Think of everything that militates against it, including, alas, students-on-the-make.

So teachers need autonomy, insulation from the school board. But they also need example and encouragement from department heads or principals, and time to visit each others' classes, just like interns in surgery, or time to talk about each other's directorial successes and failures. In reading Genesis with ninth graders, how could I have nudged them to see that the wiseass question "Did Adam and Eve have belly buttons?" illustrates a crucial issue about terms of dis-

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course? How would you lead a class to see that "Candy is dandy, but liquor is quicker" is funny, but that "Candy is pleasant, but alcohol is more efficacious" is not funny, or at least not in the same way? How important is recognition of distinctions in voice? Probably more important than most writing on education suggests. Conversations on these and like matters reinforce an instructor's sense of what counts in the end and teach us all how to go about our tasks. Time must be available for these exchanges.

You asked how important is pay? It is important in itself, of course, but it speaks for something even more important, which is the public recognition of what we are doing. A delight in pondering the particulars of one's field and the recognition of others, in whatever forms, come first. Ted Sizer's book, *Horace's Compromise,* shows us all just how working conditions, a function of public expense, are also crucial. Teachers crushed by their hours and the number of students in their charge eventually lose their gimp. They make the compromise, or they abandon what they had dearly hoped would be a true profession—if it's not too late, that is, if they're not too old.

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Robert Baker

Recently, in St. Paul, I as the "textbook publisher" was asked: "Why are the textbooks so bad?" My response was: "Who selected the book?" The audience responded: "Well, the book was found in the classroom, so either the teachers or some committee selected it." My answer was: "Are you saying, then, that the book selected has the following deficiencies, and therefore all books have these same deficiencies? Until you can assemble all eighth-grade American histories, examine them, and tell me that every one is two years below grade level, or that the content is deficient, I'm not going to take too seriously the fact that you say you have a book that is two years

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below grade level, that is, reading level, and that it has some main content deficiency. Nor do I believe that it is true of all eighth-grade American history books." For the first time—it seemed to me—those people (state legislators, state education officials, and the like) heard someone say, "Well, there's a range of materials out there, and what you see is what you've chosen; it doesn't necessarily reflect the quality of what's available." Someone will infer that such a statement means I don't think there's anything wrong with the textbooks. That's hardly the case. When I am told, in effect, that much of what is written in textbooks today is uninteresting, I say "right." I also say that as soon as certain restrictions about what may be included as content (whether it is sexist, violent, or the like) are removed, you'll get a range of content that's more interesting, that more accurately reflects what is happening in this country today to young people. We're not allowed to use certain kinds of literature or certain authors; that literature is not acceptable to certain subgroups who have a voice in the selection process, the political process of selecting books. And remember now, we're talking about books for children as old as twelfth grade. And we're talking about instructional materials of every kind, with guidelines being set in some instances by statute.

Books today are going to be authored, edited, and designed to meet the major American markets—California, Texas, Florida, New York, Illinois, North Carolina, in descending order. Those are the major markets for which substantial expenditures are made. The school curricula in those states pretty much determine the materials made available throughout the country. For instance, I can take a national sampling and give you a profile on what the math curriculum will look like, and then can examine math instruction in North Carolina or in California and find the same profile; also, the same criticisms. The complaint is generally about problem solving, that it is not meeting the kinds of expectations that business or higher educational institutions have today. Some years back—say fifteen years ago—the complaint would have been about computational skills; kids didn't know how to add and subtract. Also, at that time, they didn't know how to read. Kids learn how to read these days, and they learn how to add and subtract; so the concern today is whether they comprehend at a highly inferential level what they're reading, whether they are able to analyze and solve mathematical problems with the computational skills they have. The complaint today from school people is that the instructional materials don't focus adequately on how to teach these kinds of higher-order skills.

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What a teacher means by problem-solving is not what a theoretician concerned with cognitive skills means when he uses the term. When a teacher talks about the problem, he or she is often concerned with a youngster being able to cope with a specific question. When a cognitive scientist talks about problem-solving, the concern is with the process by which a person develops or uses strategies for solving problems. When you're developing teaching materials, you try to do both; first you design instruction, then you provide the teacher with word problems that incorporate those insights, recognizing that these are two totally different things.

I think that if I can give you a sense of what's happened in the design of instruction materials for grades kindergarten through twelve in the last fifteen years you will get some sense of why the author's role has changed so dramatically. Let us talk about reading, which starts in the pre-school or kindergarten and continues to the eighth grade. Reading is built on skill sequences around which content is developed. Stories are written or selected specifically for each given grade level. It is not a book that is being produced but an instructional system, designed to teach kids how to learn to read. The system must meet all the criteria that state guidelines, parent groups, special interest groups, teachers, administrators, and others have. Their notions and expectations—what the youngsters ought to be exposed to in their reading curriculum—must be considered. There are diagnostic testing instruments, intended to identify specific skills taught, and the order in which they are taught, and finer and finer cuts are made to address the question of how a youngster learns how to recognize words, to understand them, to put them together. So, in reading publishing we have gone from what we in the 1960s called graded "readers," of which there were eight, along with a little teacher's guide that suggested how you go about working with a youngster, to instructional systems of over two hundred pieces that concentrate on word attack or decoding skills to a level of detail that you wouldn't believe. Now, we focus on vocabulary development and comprehension, literal and inferential: the process skills that allow a reader to combine personal experience or prior knowledge with textual information in order to derive meaning from a sentence, a paragraph, a chapter, or whatever. And this is all generated by the "Johnny Can't Read" preoccupation of some years ago. There was an increasing focus on why youngsters weren't learning to read. If you looked at the research data across the country from teachers, you'd see their expression of that concern. They have a large number of kids that they're trying to deal with, and someone says, "all of

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those kids ought to be able to achieve this level of capability." So what's happened is that the instructional materials have begun to expand to incorporate levels of attention to the detailed processes that years ago, in all probability, weren't even understood. There are things that kids and teachers learn today that you would look at with amazement, and say, "Is that how it works?" This is a change of major consequence. I think if you put reading program instructional content on a continuum, you'd see a vast change from the late 1950s to today. And you would see that the changes in emphasis run parallel to the outcries about what youngsters have or have not been able to do—mostly *not*—at particular points in time.

Today, another concern is about writing. You don't have to be a genius to recognize that if you can't express your thoughts clearly in writing, then you're not thinking clearly. The voices from the people who are doing research in the area say, "You've got to have kids writing and reading, learning to express themselves at the same time they're learning how to read." What we try to do is to connect theory with classroom practice. In many classrooms, you have teachers who look on writing as filling in blanks or sentences, not composing: they teach parts of speech and sentence structure, not how to compose phrases to produce meaning that can be understood. The teacher believes that teaching composition is having kids write sentences. So, in a competitive market place what will sell are practice exercises in writing that show kids how to write sentences. Now, some teachers *do* teach composing. We, as a matter of fact, have two English series; one that reflects an approach to writing consistent with what most teachers will accept, and one that focuses on composing as a process. The latter finds favor with about 15 percent of the market. It's an excellent series, but I have yet to find a school district that has adopted it by what we call "teacher vote." It's been adopted because a leader in an English department or another authority in the school has said, "We are going to teach composing; this series of books will help us teach composing better than any other series; we are going to use it." That's the way the series gets purchased.

There was a time, you see, when heads of departments, principals, and superintendents began to give away textbook selection responsibility—to a popular vote of the teachers. Now, as we moved from what I would call committee selection and review, which still exists today, to popular votes—which in many cases means putting all the books on a table, and having all the teachers file by over a period of two weeks to examine them and cast a ballot—it didn't

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take very long for many of us to begin to hear what their preferences were.

A large number of teachers search for simplicity. The page has to look simple; that calls for good size type with leading, a large amount of white space, and labels, labels that don't require much thought. The pages must be explicitly organized. The graphics cannot reflect anything that's too subtle or that would create any kind of mixed or confused messages. Pages must be very plain, but very attractive. Graphically, there is frequently a preference for photographs; everything must be concrete and real. And the success with which this simplicity is achieved is measured by those who turn the pages and look at them. Does the material jump out? Does it seem clear? Can you look at a page and, in two seconds, know exactly what is on it? Is the teacher's manual exactly what you want it to be? Does it require a lot of preparation on the teacher's part? Are there clear directions as to what other materials would be useful, where they are, how to secure them? Are they all referenced? Cross-referenced? It is all a fairly elaborate process. But, as you can see, if you do anything that doesn't optimize simplicity, regardless of how complex the teaching of that particular subject or skill may be, in a popular vote situation, you reduce the probability of being selected. As you move more into the content fields, clearly, the importance of content increases. As you move through the grades, into junior high school and high school, your books are increasingly selected by content people. They're looking at content as well as design. But I would say that basically the same kind of concerns are there. Simplicity is still prized; "difficult" is a terrible word. If a book gets labeled "difficult," you've had it. Sales will not meet expectations. You will spend your time trying to show that the book isn't really so difficult. And in any kind of product sale situation, if you have to spend time showing why something isn't deficient, you'll fail.

We receive several kinds of feedback about what we publish. We get feedback that we solicit from teachers who use our materials on a regular basis. I think that we tend to hear the largest concern expressed today in the two content areas that occupy most of the instructional time in school. One is reading, the largest; the next is math, which occupies the second largest amount of class time. The major concerns that people have today—parents and teachers—have to do with whether the youngster can read, write, compute. From time to time there are situations where the treatment of a topic may become an issue in a social studies text, for example, or a biology text. I remember that we did a high-school literature series that

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included contemporary literature. This was in the early 1970s, and school people were fired for selecting a series that incorporated literature that was unacceptable to some vocal parent groups. As a result, you don't find many contemporary writers—particularly not any controversial ones, from different racial or ethnic groups—included in school literature texts.

It's amazing how within a short period of time we've moved from a political issue that said that we had to develop materials to address a large group of students in our schools to one that says we need to write materials that are going to increase the level of expectancy for youngsters. In the 1960s and early 1970s, the issue was to reach a wide range of youngsters in the schools, many of whom were disenfranchised from the educational system. They required motivating materials, and we had to publish them. Those youngsters are still here. But what you see happening right now is publishers substantially increasing the reading difficulty, the concept load or what, of materials and doing it with safety. The political climate has changed.

I believe that we have a great deal to learn about size and growth, and about our commitment to growth. We have large institutions rather than small ones. During the baby-boom years, we tried to accommodate everyone. We ended up with a population that nobody had ever seen before and we didn't know what to do with it. Now, perhaps, we have a second chance. Our schools are less crowded. Can we take advantage of it? I really believe that condition can bring about an improvement in the quality of teaching. What we do in the schools for kids without social advantage is terribly important. I hope that the focus on public education can again make us aware that some things can only be done in small classes, where homework can be read and where books can be explored.

Conditions are changing, dramatically. Are our children being prepared for change? Do they learn to recognize the range of possibilities that exist? Are they sufficiently instructed in alternatives? I think there may be more alternatives than is commonly believed. I look at education, and I look at schooling as we now know it, and I see only small constituencies acknowledging the problem. What skills must the schools provide? If, as I believe, they are essentially cognitive skills, how are these taught? If I find limitations in myself and the people I work with, nine times out of ten it is not simply that we do not express ourselves well enough in writing or in speaking, but that we cannot see that something's changed. It's not because we don't have the intelligence to see it; we seem to lack the will. Or maybe we

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don't have the security to say that what I know to be right yesterday is not going to be right tomorrow, and that I'm going to have to think very differently about what I do and how I do it. That raises, to me, the most fundamental issue—not to let the pessimism of today's reality overcome us. The political attention given to schooling right now has a potential to achieve some very good things. But they're not necessarily the things that we now perceive to be necessary or "know to be right." I don't think this is important. I really don't. I don't believe the politicians need to understand anything other than that something's changed and something needs to be done. It is for others to see the change and fix the agenda for accommodating it.

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* * *

Derek Roberts

We all lay great emphasis on the quality of life. These words must, however, ring rather hollow with the unemployed and generally disadvantaged. Industrial growth—which implies increased success in world markets—is the essential prerequisite to our being able to afford an improved way of life for all. By improvement I am thinking of such goals as adequate care for the sick, handicapped, and aged; widespread access to the educational system; and increased public spending on all that is best in scientific research, music, theater, and the fine arts. These good things, however, have to be earned and paid for; a society simply cannot finance them unless it has a thriving economy. We must therefore strive to provide sufficiently good value in our manufactured goods and services so that other nations, while not necessarily beating a path to our doorstep, will nevertheless be responsive to our engineers and salesmen when they set out to forge new markets. It is science-based technology that makes the improvement of goods possible and it is the quality of our people as scientists, engineers, technologists, and managers that makes technology happen.

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The rate of technological change and the increasing need for interdisciplinary teams to perform competitive research and development combine to set certain demands on the balance between breadth and depth in the undergraduate education of scientists and engineers. Furthermore, people must expect to change their specialization more than once during their working lives. This requires continuing education and training as well as a solid, broad educational foundation on which they can build new specializations. These factors lead me to urge that, just as in the case of technology the concept of core, enabling technologies is proving very useful, so in the educational sphere the concept of "enabling academic (teaching) disciplines" should be developed. The selection of disciplines should take account of the needs set by the areas of technological growth, and should aim at creating a firm educational foundation capable of meeting the demands of continuing technological change. Our principal competitors seem to recognize—more than the United Kingdom does—this need for educational breadth. It is important that our various engineering institutions appreciate the value of a good, broad education in applied science and engineering over the narrow, professional interests of any one institution.

If British industry is to benefit from educational breadth, it must follow the example of other countries in taking a more active stance in the area of continuing education, specialist training, and technical updating: it cannot rely on the universities to produce experts in the specialty of the month. I see encouraging signs that the larger companies in the electronics industry recognize this need and are taking steps to work closely with the Open University and the rest of the academy to exploit the techniques of open—or distance—learning. Equally encouraging are efforts to encourage more girls to study the physical sciences and engineering. The challenge to the educational system, in short, is to face up to technological change in a way that is not gimmicky, pursuing change for its own sake, but is genuinely responsive.

It is impossible to discuss technological change and its impact on the relationship between industry and the academy without drawing attention to the more general, less specific, needs of wealth-producing industry. In a nutshell: we need people who are numerate, literate, creative, and able to communicate. Above all, we need people who care about doing their job—whatever it is—really well. This means defining the pursuit of excellence as a virtue, for which precision and attention to detail are accepted as normal behavior. This, I suspect, is the area in which the educational system—particularly in the early

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years—needs to reexamine itself and set much higher standards. The erosion of the discipline of English grammar is symptomatic, in my view, of the lack of adequate commitment to doing a job really well. If this situation is to be improved—and it must—then I suspect that a start will have to be made in the areas of teacher training and re-training.

Just as schools must strive to instill a sense of excellence in the young, so too must industry realize that its most precious form of capital investment is not in new equipment, but in new people. There is some evidence today that inadequate attention is being given to the stage *before* recruitment, a stage during which companies should be thinking about the job to be done and considering, not just the academic disciplines of the target recruits, but the mix of academic and practical abilities and personal attitudes that would best benefit the company. There are some important jobs in engineering, for example, for which the best-suited candidate is not necessarily the one with the best academic record. Failure to recognize this and continuing simply to match requirements to recruits can exacerbate skill shortages, individual frustration, and unemployment. It is hardly surprising that evaluations based only on some form of interview lead to disappointing results. Ideally, a firm would have a "sale or return" period during which the "product" can be put through its paces. Hence, the importance, which cannot be overemphasized, of such evaluation opportunities as pre-university jobs and sponsorship at both undergraduate and graduate levels. We should remember, however, that the evaluation process goes both ways, and the manner in which we treat students at this phase of their education and training will have a major influence on their rating of particular companies—indeed, of the entire manufacturing industry.

Industry has shown it can do more than merely criticize the educational system. But it should become more active still: in lobbying government to urge greater recognition of the need for national priority investment in education and in high-quality academic research; and in establishing closer and better contacts with schools, colleges of all kinds, polytechnic institutes, and universities. The goal of industry's actions should be a simple one—to encourage our best young people to assume creative roles in wealth-producing industry.

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Fr. Sullivan: You have asked whether the rationale for the Catholic school is the same today as it was thirty years ago. I would say that the rationale for the Catholic school is the same, but that society and the education of the people sending youngsters to the schools has changed. In the past, one spoke of protecting the faith or of preserving the culture; today, one speaks of the uniqueness of the school, of allowing those who attend to be rooted in that uniqueness and have it be the basis of decisions they make, as they contribute not only to the Church but to society. The uniqueness of the school is stressed as integral to the total program; it is hoped that students are formed in that uniqueness; that decisions they make as adults will stem from the values this education instills in them.

Sr. Roach: Parents are looking at whether or not private schools are really perpetuating what we call gospel values. I believe that the churches still have a very strong concern for the immigrant population in the United States today; it's certainly a challenge to Catholic educators. Education is really the gateway to a better life. The number of non-Catholic students in our parochial schools attests to that. We don't want our schools to become elite; we simply want them to provide quality Catholic education. A quality education is one that allows every young man and woman in our schools to achieve what he or she is able to achieve. That suggests respect for the learning style of an individual; that requires quality teachers who have a repertoire of skills necessary to meet the needs of different children. "Catholic" should be construed in a very broad sense. We live in a global world, thus Catholic-school education must be not only global but ecumenical and Christ-centered. This focus was not common when Catholic education began in this country. There is much talk today about race and class, and their importance in the schools. People are concerned about sexism in our single-sex schools. If we retain our single-sex schools, we need to ask if we can we do it in such a way that we help those young men and women be a part of a culture that's changing. How can we better educate the laity, who have increasingly important functions in our schools, to understand more fully what our Catholic schools today are all about?

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Fr. Sullivan: One focus in this central office is to raise questions such as these with faculty, and more important, with school administrators. These issues must be considered in the overall planning and staff development at the school. Administrators must be ready to deal with the changing population of an area, ready to show staff the opportunities these changes bring. We need to raise those issues, to support their discussion, so that the schools don't become elite.

Sr. Roach: We are looking for the curriculum to be developmental, integrated, religious, and global. Some parents don't want that. That is why some are placing their children in non-Catholic private schools. There is a very strong thrust in the Church right now towards justice education, and this is a struggle for Catholics. In our schools, both Catholics and non-Catholics must participate in the religious formation that is taking place, and this implies certain values.

Fr. Sullivan: The school is Catholic; it's sponsored by the Church that is Catholic; the atmosphere is Catholic. It's part of our history and tradition. The Church has always sponsored evangelization efforts; in a sense, here is a home mission effort in the best sense of the word. There is opposition to it from time to time. People have to grow in an understanding that things are changing. We try to do so with gentleness, patience, and with pastoral care. We have tried to promote attitudinal change. Sometimes a faculty member may be upset over a discussion-unit on racism that has been incorporated into a social-studies course. It may be that that teacher is a long-time city resident whose father or brother has been a victim of the quota system in the fire department or had some other negative experience; affirmative action is an attitudinal thing that requires constant review. The busing issue in Boston was very, very difficult for many people to understand. Such things are never easy to address. Each generation of Catholics responds differently. Priests still favor Catholic schools, but as you begin to look at the age groups, you find that older priests tend to favor the traditional Catholic school, while the priests ordained eleven to twenty years ago are often more interested in other forms of education than the Catholic school. They are neutral or skeptical on the effectiveness of the Catholic school. Just as there are differences among the clergy, there are also differences among the parents.

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Sr. Roach: One school, for example, introduced a world religion class. The teacher invited people of different religions to come and speak to the students. A member of Hari Krishna was invited. A parent phoned to complain. There may well have been other parents who felt the same way; they chose to remain silent. In our central cities there are youngsters from very isolated ethnic neighborhoods venturing into situations where they meet the children of professional people, of local white-collar or blue-collar workers. We also have children from low-income housing. To a degree, there is some class integration in some city schools. On the other hand, there are schools that can be described as serving an elite. But even there, things are changing. Catholic-school populations reflect the neighborhoods where they are located. There is a Catholic school outside Boston that used to be composed entirely of the children of professional parents; there were none of limited means. But it turns out the school now has students from working-class backgrounds. Things have changed; they are learning to live and work with one another. This is true in many changing areas of our archdiocese.

Fr. Sullivan: You asked about salaries in Catholic schools: that remains a sensitive area. It may be that one has to ask whether there is a difference between a ministry and a career, and whether, when you invite people to teach in the Catholic schools, you're inviting them to a ministry. For financial reasons it's very hard to invite someone to a teaching career in the Catholic schools today. It may be that we must explore the question of ministry more fully.

Sr. Roach: One concern is with new teachers. Development is extremely important to us: in-service training, particularly on the local level, counts immensely. Lawyers and doctors and other professionals agree to learn from one another; so must new teachers. There is a repertoire of skills that we must not be hesitant to share. If we bring a master teacher into a school to share the techniques that he or she has acquired over a long period of time, then we will have good beginning teachers. It depends greatly upon the administrator of the school, whether he or she is willing to delegate responsibility in the training of new teachers. Ordinarily, teachers are supervised by department heads as well as by the principal. They all have an opportunity to visit other schools where there may be more skilled teachers. There are opportunities for teachers to raise questions concerning how best to respond to the needs of students.

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Teaching is service. Youngsters may not remember the algebra, the chemistry, or the history that they're taught, but they will remember someone who cares for them. That is where values come in. In selecting a teacher, we are still looking for people who genuinely like children. We ask prospective teachers: "Why do you want to come to teach in a Catholic school? Is it because you imagine there's going to be good discipline? Tell me your reasons." We listen intently. The final decision is always the principal's, but department heads also interview prospective clients and make recommendations.

Fr. Sullivan: Principals have become much more sophisticated through experience. There were problems when the number of religious who had an opportunity to move outside of their community created many vacancies at once, and the percentage of lay teachers began to increase dramatically. We conducted a number of in-service programs concentrating on interviewing techniques, looking at qualities and competencies that needed to be evaluated. We needed to teach principals and department heads how to check references, how to ask relevant questions, how to assess qualities as well as competencies of the person. Through trial and error, we are now at the point where people are asking the right questions and sharing the information with one another.

Sr. Roach: You ask us to imagine a situation where we have someone, a superb person, who might in many ways serve admirably as a role model but whom we know to be incompetent in his or her chosen field: what do we do? Initially, we offer support—consultation. Only after a period of time do we arrive at a final decision whether to let them go. An individual may well be an expert theoretically, but if he or she can't convey that knowledge, the performance is questionable. Math is one area where it is especially difficult to hold on to able people because of the attractions of high-tech industry. In the Northeast where Wang and others are actively recruiting, principals call to say: "I just can't find anybody." This is where big business and government could assist schools, private as well as public.

For the most part, our secondary schools call themselves college prep. But some schools are beginning to take young people who, on the basis of placement-exam scores, are not likely to go to college. Now, what schools contend is that by the time those youngsters are juniors, they will be college material. They may not be that at placement time because they are still at an age where they're not sure

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what they want to do or be. What needs to be done then is to create a curriculum that meets their needs. We have high expectations of our young people, and it is not just our mission to bring them in to a safe harbor. There may be a struggle at times between administrators and teachers. Teachers within particular content areas may say, "I want the very best students here; I don't want to do first-year algebra in two years." It is then we have to talk about what the school is all about. "Are we here to educate young people, or are we here to serve you? Schools are not only for teachers; they're for children." Those situations produce struggle. Our challenge is that the schools cannot continue to be the schools of the 1950s; if we do not begin to see movement, then we had better start asking some difficult questions.

Fr. Sullivan: Another area that produces great tension for us has to do with the motivation, selection, and affirmation of students. It is the question of why one youngster comes to our school and another does not. In the end, children select the school. Therefore, there's something that is driving them to us. There has to be a certain motivation; it may be peer-pressure, parents, or even a single parent who's holding two jobs. Because of the small size of our schools we offer significant affirmation for the individual student. The city youngster with family difficulties and a lack of support in areas where the suburban youngster may be more advantaged, has to be moved by the very atmosphere of the school. There are numbers of young people in the cities, particularly, or even the suburbs, who for one reason or other do not choose Catholic schools even though they might greatly benefit from them. Recruitment is one area we might do well to look at. A parish priest in the city sees a child with potential, and says to himself, "This kid is going to be swallowed up." That priest will direct the youngster to our school. When you look at the new immigrants in Boston, you notice that many are not attracted to our school even though they are Catholic in name. Our situation is not made easy by those priests who have served in, say, Latin America and who regard our Catholic schools as elitist, who are more committed to base community. Generally, they will not recommend a youngster to an institution they consider is making an incorrect use of church resources, and is providing a type of education they do not favor. These priests are much more favorable to family education; their concern is the community. That is a tension frequently encountered in this and other cities. There are certain immigrants who come to Boston who are well-educated and very

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school-oriented. They move right into our schools and are comfortable there. This is not true for all immigrants. The priest still remains a crucial figure in all our recruitment. Someone recently arrives; he meets a priest; in no time at all he's an altar boy and he's enrolled in one of our Catholic schools. That priest knows that child might get lost in the public school. The priest may not even be an advocate of Catholic education, but he's doing the same thing as the suburban parent: he's looking out for the child's future.

A problematic area is that there are some priests who will be church administrators five years from now who have no formation, give no support, and find no challenge in the value of Catholic-school teaching. Fortunately, our new archbishop is a great supporter of Catholic schools, and he has wondered why there are not more of them. You realize, of course, that one can be a good Catholic priest, interested in Catholic education, but still not favor the establishment of Catholic schools. The preference may be for adult education, youth ministry, formation groups, and the like. It's largely a matter of money. Some feel that the resources invested in Catholic schools over the years have not yielded a sufficient return. In other words, because of the traditional heavy investment in schools, no other program has had a chance. All of our trained teachers and all of our subsidies have gone into the schools. It's sort of a revelation when priests ask, "Is this the only answer?" People are beginning to question whether the Church will have the financial resources in the future to maintain these schools. We feel they can; if you look at the long-range financial picture, it is probable that the schools will not be as financially dependent on the local church as they have been in the past.

However, because of long-range planning and the advisory boards of parents, I believe the schools *are* going to be able to exist without a large subsidy from the parish. What we've noticed is that parents want these schools, and they are willing to do something to help them financially. There is clearly tremendous parent-power that we have not fully tapped.

Sr. Roach: The Carnegie Endowment study indicated a strong thrust towards the idea of service for students. That service dimension has been very much a part of our school curriculum for a long time. The service dimension has raised lots of questions with many parents. We have schools today where youngsters are on service projects for six weeks. During that time, the schools constantly had to be educating parents on how the service project, and the reflection that students

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were required to make on their service, was going to contribute to their lives as adult men and women in this country.

Fr. Sullivan: Parents have some skills that we do not have. We come before parents and parent boards and ask them to share those skills in management and finance and, obviously, parenting.

Sr. Roach: There is real concern in schools today for the child of the single-parent family. There are junior-high classrooms where there is not a single child from a two-parent family.

Fr. Sullivan: This doesn't mean that we are able to care for all. Take, for example, the youngster with a very serious handicap. Because of lack of funding, we are not able to provide certain very special programs. It is very difficult to be pastoral and helpful, inviting that person into the school, when you know that you can't possibly match what the public sector is able to provide, at least on paper, with its type of funding. That is one of the greatest challenges we have had to face. Now we have begun to collaborate with the local universities to move to address those questions. This is what makes my work a challenge. You can take a problem like that, which has not normally been part of our tradition, and seek to address it. We continue to develop an outreach program, to attract the new immigrants and others identified with the Church, to our school, challenging them in the best sense of the word.

Sr. Roach: Our schools still don't stretch the children far enough. So much depends on the teacher. There may be five or six teachers in a school that really challenge students; those teachers are remembered. Why do we not have more? Well, we have good teachers for eight or nine years and they leave. Another group comes in, but they're new teachers and they have to be trained. It all takes time. When you've got new teachers, you've got to decide on your priorities, on how to work with them. You have to be willing to work to make it different; you have to have a goal. There has been a lot of movement in the schools in the last ten years, but there is always a long way to go.

Fr. Sullivan: It takes a long time to establish credibility, and I think we have done it, to a great extent. It is an intangible presence, like being at a celebration, being there in good days and bad. We are there. It allows us to call people to accountability. We have been in the midst of a very difficult age in the life of this city, but we can call

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people today on justice issues. We can study the Peace Pastoral together and ask every principal to study and review it with his faculty. We have done this on very limited financial resources; we're moving well, we have momentum.

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